

# **MONASTICISM IN BUDDHISM OF *NEPAL-MANDALA*: Continuity and Changes**

**A PhD Dissertation  
Submitted  
To  
DEAN'S OFFICE,  
Faculty of Humanities & Social Science  
In  
fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of  
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD.)  
In  
Buddhist Studies**

**By**

**Surendra Man Bajracharya**  
Roll No. 22/2064  
T.U Regd. No. 32-065456-4  
**Central Department of Buddhist Studies**  
Kirtipur, Kathmandu  
Nepal  
2014

## Letter of Recommendation

We certify that Mr. Surendra Man Bajracharya, has written this dissertation entitled “Monasticism in the *Buddhism of Nepal-maṇḍala*: Continuity and Changes” to meet the fulfillment of the requirement of PhD in *Buddhist Studies* under our supervision. He has consulted and used available sources to complete the dissertation. To the best of our knowledge, the dissertation or a part there-of has not yet been previously submitted for any other academic accomplishment. We hereby recommend the dissertation for final examination by the Research Committee of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Tribhuvan University, in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY in *Buddhist Studies*.

Supervisor

Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya

Dean

Lumbini Buddhist University

Co-supervisor

Prof. Dr. Ranjana Bajracharya

Head

Department of Buddhist Studies

Padma Kanya Campus

Date:

## Declaration

I, hereby declare that this PhD Dissertation entitled “**Monasticism in Buddhism of Nepal-maṇḍala: Continuity and changes**” submitted to the Dean’s Office, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Tribhuvan University is entirely my original work prepared under the supervision of my supervisor, Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya. I have made due acknowledgements to all ideas and information borrowed from different sources in course of writing this dissertation. I have made my own interpretation in several cases on the basis of available evidences, some of which have not been used by any scholar in Nepalese context. The outcomes of this dissertation have not been presented or submitted anywhere else for the award of any degree or for any other purpose. No part of the contents of the dissertation has ever been used for any academic award before. I shall be solely responsible if any evidence is found against my declaration.

Surendra Man Bajracharya

Date:

## Approval letter

The dissertation entitled “Monasticism in Buddhism of Nepal-mandala: Continuity and Changes” prepared by Mr. Surendra Man Bajracharya in fulfillment of the requirement of PhD Degree in Buddhist studies, was submitted for final examination to the Research Committee of Dean’s office, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur.

I hereby certify that the Research Committee of the faculty has found this dissertation satisfactory in scope and quality and has therefore accepted for the degree.

Prof. Dr. Chintamani Sharma  
Dean and Chairman  
Research Committee  
Faculty of Humanities and Social Science  
Tribhuvan University

Date:

## Acknowledgement

I am obliged and grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya, the Dean of Lumbini Buddhist University and the chairman of Lotus Research Centre for his continuous guidance through out the preparation of this dissertation entitled “Monasticism in the Buddhism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*: Continuity and Changes” right from the selection of the topic.

I thank my co-supervisor Prof. Dr. Ranjana Bajracharya, the head of Buddhist Studies Section at Padma Kanya Campus for her valuable guidance assisting me in finalizing the dissertation preparation. Having authored several articles and texts on *Newār* Buddhist culture, her interest in the subject proved conducive in guiding me providing important suggestions.

I am also thankful to Dr. Milan Ratna Shakya, the head of Central Department of Buddhist Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur who took care in correction and completion of required formalities of necessary proceedings especially in compilation of Literature Review and getting it approved from concerned experts.

My thank is also due to Prof. Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, former head of Central Department of Buddhist Studies, Kirtipur, for his arrangement of preliminary procedural accomplishments like Proposal defense in presence of team of subject experts like Prof. Dr. Vajra Raj Shakya, ex-Director of CERID, T.U, Mr. R. B. Bande, ex-Cultural Minister, approval of the proposal, seminar paper presentation related to the subject etc. Writing of this dissertation would not have been possible, if there was not support and encouragement from such academic experts. The work of writing dissertation provided me with an opportunity to put on record my professional and intellectual wits accumulated during the course of conducting the dissertation.

I express my gratitude towards Prof. Dr. Nav Raj Kanel, the former Dean of Faculty of Humanities and Social Science for his kind instructions and support in complying through the University rules and providing us with Research

Methodology Training workshop at the inception of dissertation work which had been very helpful and conducive in applying methodology.

I am thankful to Prof. Dr. Tara Kant Pokhrel, former acting Dean of Faculty of Humanities and Social Science for making necessary procedural arrangement for Dissertation submission and valuable instructions.

I am equally thankful to Dr. Raj Kumar Pokhrel, Asst. Dean of Faculty of Faculty of Humanities and Social Science for providing me suggestions in the last moment of final dissertation submission

I would like to thank Mr. Siddhi Ratna Bajracharya and Mr. Uttam Shrestha, the staff and incharge of Microfilm section of National Archive, Ramshah Path, Kathmandu, respectively. They not only permitted me to their storehouse of vast historical documents but also helped me to have the required copies.

I am also thankful to Mr. Raja Shaky, in charge of Asha Archive, who helped me in getting information from the Archive.

My thank also goes to staff of Lotus Research Centre, especially to Dr. Manik Man Bajracharya for providing necessary consultation especially in getting the required books from the library of the centre and from his personal collection, in using e-library of Lotus Research Centre. Our association with Lotus Research Centre, the organization dedicated to campaign of arousing public awareness about the conservation of Buddhist cultural heritage, headed by able leadership of my supervisor, Dr. Bajracharya, also provided me several occasions of interactions with eminent foreign scholars specially during international conference times organized by the centre. Such occasions have been time of discussion on Newar Buddhism and knowing their views. Therefore, they also had been inspirational and deserve my thank.

My thank is due to my colleagues, *Kalyān-mitra* from the field of Buddhist Studies, especially Mr. Indra Siddhi Bajracharya, Mr. Triratna Manandhar, Mr. Gautam Bir Bajracharya and Ven. *Bhikshu* Sangharakshita. It was our joint effort of these five friends including me that we decided to enroll in the candidacy for PhD program. In the adverse situations when we feel like quitting PhD program due to certain

reasons we had ourselves been guiding force to stick to the program with mutual pleading and sharing of ideas. When we happened to meet, we would be knowingly or unknowingly discussing about our subjects of PhD. Our companionship has been inspirational and instrumental to completion of this Dissertation.

I express my gratitude to Ven. *Bhikṣu* Bodhigyan for allowing me to use the library of Viswo-Śānti Vihar and helping me by providing necessary information.

Finally, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my friends, relatives and family for their support and cooperation. In this connection I specially I thank my wife Mandira Bajracharya for bearing with me when I could not discharge my duty towards her due to my excessive indulgence indulgence/absorption in the dissertation writing. I appreciate her patience with period of my daily long hours of work. This also applies to my elder brother Rabindra Man Bajracharya and other family members especially my daughters, to whom I could not give time and attention when required during intense period of dissertation preparation. Without their support, this dissertation would not have been completed. Here, I am reminiscing the fond memory of my beloved father, late Ratna Man Bajracharya who always supported and favoured me in my pursuit of academic enhancement. Therefore, this dissertation is dedicated to him.

Surendra Man Bajracharya

2013

## Table of Contents

	Page
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter of Recommendation</li> <li>• Acknowledgement</li> <li>• Approval letter</li> <li>• Declaration</li> </ul>	
<b>Introduction of the study Area- <i>NEPAL-MANḌALA</i></b>	1 - 4
<b>Chapter I INTRODUCTION</b>	5 - 17
1.1 Back-ground of study	5
1.2 Statement of the problem	9
1.3 Aims & Objectives of study	9
1.4 Literature Review	10
1.5 Significance of Study	12
1.6 Limitation of study	13
1.7 Research Methodology	13
1.8 Chapter Scheme	14
1.9 Language of the Research work	17
 <b>Chapter II Literature Review</b>	 18- 102
<b>Reviewed Texts</b>	
2.1 Brian H. Hodgson. <i>Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet</i> , (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, Reprint 1991, first published by Trubner & Co., 57 & 59 Ludgat Hill, London, 1874).	20 - 31



- 2.2 John K, Locke. *Karunamaya: The Cult of Avlokiteswara-Matsyendranath in the Valley of Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan for CNAS, 1980) 31 - 49
- 2.3 David N. Gellner. *Monks, Housholder and Tantric Priests*, ( New Delhi: Foundation Books, by arrangement with Cambridge University Press UK, 1993) 49 - 60
- 2.4 Todd T. Lewis. *Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal –Narratives and Rituals of Newār Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York, 2000) 60 – 70

### **Reviewed Journal/Research Articles**

- 2.5 John K. Locke, S.J., ‘Newār Buddhist initiation Rite’, *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of The Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Kirtipur: Tribhuvan University, Vol. II, No.2, Year 2032) 70 - 73
- 2.6 Michael Allen. “Buddhism without Monks: Newār Vajrayāna Buddhism of the Katmandu Valley” *South Asia*, 3 (1973) 73 - 79
- 2.7 Stephen M. Greenwold. “Monkhood Versus Priesthood in Newār Buddhism” in *Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal*, Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd. 1974) 79 - 84
- 2.8 Siegfried Leinhard. “Nepal: The Survival of Indian Buddhism in a Kingdom”, in *The World of Buddhism, Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1984, Reprint 2007) 85 - 89
- 2.9 Alexander von Rospatt. “The Survival of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Nepal – A Fresh Appraisal”: in *Buddhismus im Geschichte und Gegenwart* 5. (Hamburg:Universitat Hamburg (Weiterbildendes Studium), 2002. 89 – 94
- 2.10 Additional Literature Review 94-102

### **Chapter III Concept of Monasticism in Religious Practices 103 - 113**

- 3.1 Monasticism in *Christianity*
- 3.2 Monasticism in *Hinduism*
- 3.3 *Islamic* monasticism

### 3.4 Jain monasticism

## **Chapter IV *Buddhist* Monasticism and its components** 114 - 133

- 4.1 Monasticism in early *Buddhism*
- 4.2 Monasticism in later *Buddhism*
- 4.3 Components of *Buddhist* Monasticism
  - 4.3.1 Triple gems,
  - 4.3.2 *Saṅgha*
  - 4.3.3 Monks/Nuns
  - 4.3.4 Monastery
  - 4.3.5 Monastic Code or *Vinaya* or the rules for the monastics
  - 4.3.6 Regular Councils

## **Chapter V *Buddhist* Monasticism through the ages** 134 - 142

- 5.1 Pre-classical or Formative period
- 5.2 Classical Period
- 5.3 Semi classical Period
- 5.4 Medieval Period
- 5.5 Modern Period

## **Chapter VI *Buddhist* Monasticism and its components in *Nepal-maṇḍala*** 143 - 172

- 6.1 Triple gems
  - 6.1.1 *Buddha*
    - 6.1.1.1 *Pañca -Buddha*
    - 6.1.1.2 *Dīpaṅkar Buddha*
    - 6.1.1.3 *Saptatathāgata-Buddha*
  - 6.1.2 *Dharma*
  - 6.1.3 *Saṅgha*
- 6.2 Monks
- 6.3 *Saṅgha* members
- 6.4 Monastery
- 6.5 Monastic Code
- 6.6 Regular Councils
  - 6.6.1 Councils in Kathmandu
    - 6.6.1.1 The *Ācārya Guthi*- Council for ecclesiastical affairs

- 6.6.1.2 Council of *Śākyas*
- 6.6.2 Councils in Lalitpur
  - 6.6.2.1 Gathering of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*
- 6.6.3 Councils in Bhaktapur

## Chapter VII. History of *Buddhist* Monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*

173 - 213

- 7.1 Mythological period
- 7.2 Ancient Period -Formative period
  - 7.2.1 *Kirānti* Period
  - 7.2.2 *Lichchavī* Period
- 7.3 Medieval period
  - 7.3.1 Early Medieval Period (879-1396 AD)
    - 7.3.1.1 Atīśā's role
    - 7.3.1.2 *Nepal-maṇḍala* as popular destination for *Buddhist* masters from neighbouring countries
    - 7.3.1.3 State of *Buddhism* before Śāṅkarācārya's visit
    - 7.3.1.4 Impact of Śāṅkarācārya's visit
    - 7.3.1.5 Popularity of Great *Buddhist* learning centres- Nālandā and Vikramśīla
    - 7.3.1.6 Monastic Practice by the king
    - 7.3.1.7 Influx of Indian Buddhist monks and masters
    - 7.3.1.8 Dharmaswāmin's account
    - 7.3.1.9 Period of Hardship
    - 7.3.1.10 Socio-religious policy of Jayasthitimalla(1382-1395 AD)
    - 7.3.1.11 Summation of account on Early Medieval period
  - 7.3.2 Later Medieval Period (1397-1768 AD)
    - 7.3.2.1 Vaṇratna (1384-1469 AD)
    - 7.3.2.2 Division of *Nepal-maṇḍala* and its effects
    - 7.3.2.3 Role of Śrinivāsmalla
    - 7.3.2.4 Summation of account on Later Medieval Period
- 7.4 Modern Period
- 7.5 Rays of Hope

## Chapter VIII. Sectarian Influences on *Buddhist* Monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

214 - 251

- 8.1 Impact of *Mahāsāṃghikā* on Buddhism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*
  - 8.1.1 Who were *Mahāsāṃghikās* ?

- 8.1.2 *Newār Buddhist* practices related to *Mahāsāṃghikā*
  - 8.1.2.1 The *Caitya* cult
  - 8.1.2.2 Taking Refuge
  - 8.1.2.3 Monastic Initiation
  - 8.1.2.4 The Practice of *Dāna*
  - 8.1.2.5 Fascination of number Five
  - 8.1.2.6 House Holder Monks
  - 8.1.2.7 Involvement of Monks in Life cycle rites
  - 8.1.2.8 Chariot Festival
  - 8.1.2.9 Priority to *Pañca śīla/Dasa śīla* rather than *Vinaya*
  - 8.1.2.10 Presence of *Mahāsāṃghika* literature
- 8.1.3 *Mahāsāṃghikā* serving as bridge to *Vajrayāna*
- 8.2 Influence of *Sarvāstivāda* in *Newār* Monasticism
  - 8.2.1 Monastic ordination (*Pravajyā*)
  - 8.2.2 *Sarvāstivādin* Literature in Nepal
  - 8.2.3 Use of hybrid language
  - 8.2.4 *Sarvāstivādin* sects in Nepal
  - 8.2.5 More about Householder monks
  - 8.2.6 Property holding by the monks
  - 8.2.7 *Navakarmikā* monks and *Sākya/Vajrācārya*
  - 8.2.8 Monks' involvement in rituals
  - 8.2.9 Image worship cult
- 8.3 On Path to *Mahāyāna*

## Chapter IX. Monastic Life-style

252 - 295

- 9.1 The traditional way to relate to Monastics
  - 9.1.1 Being Part of the Community
    - 9.1.1.1 Admission
    - 9.1.1.2 Making of *Vajrācārya*
    - 9.1.1.3 Higher Initiation
- 9.2 Monastic life-style - Living with vows
- 9.3 *Newār* Monastic Life style
  - 9.3.1 Duties of a *Sākyabhikṣu*
  - 9.3.2 Duties of monastics after disrobement
  - 9.3.3 Monastic activities under *Vajrayāna* Framework
- 9.4 Monastic Functions
  - 9.4.1 Daily functions

- 9.4.1.1 Daily Functions at the monastery (Generalized)
- 9.4.2 Regular functions
  - 9.3.2.1 *Vrata*- the ritual fasting
- 9.4.3 Annual functions
  - 9.4.3.1 *Gunlā*
  - 9.4.3.2 Participation in Annual councils of Ecclesiastical affairs
  - 9.4.3.3 Participation in Annual religious *Guthis*
  - 9.4.3.4 Festivals
- 9.4.4 Occasional functions
  - 9.4.4.1 *Bāhā pūjā, Civā pūjā, Karunāmaya pūjā, Tirtha sewā etc.*

## Chapter X. Monastery-the Architectural tradition in Buddhist

### Monasticism

296 - 339

- 10.1 The monastery – meaning and its types
  - 10.1.1 *Bāhā* and *Bahi* Monasteries
  - 10.1.2 *Mū Bāhā*- The principal monastery
  - 10.1.3 *Kacā Bāhā, Kacā Bahi*
  - 10.1.4 *Nani Bāhā*
- 10.2 Development of Monastery in *Nepal-maṇḍala*
- 10.3 General Structure of Nepalese *Buddhist* Monastery
  - 10.3.1 Construction base
  - 10.3.2 Outlook of *Vihāra* at a glance
  - 10.3.3 Description
- 10.4 Sacredness of Monastery
- 10.5 Social Connectivity of *Newār* Monastery
- 10.6 Working pattern of *Saṅgha* members in the monastery
- 10.7 Distributional pattern and Organization of Monasteries
  - 10.7.1 In Kāntipur
    - 10.7.1.1 Organization of *Pūi* (consolidated areas) eighteen principal *Bāhās*
    - 10.7.1.2 The group of ten monasteries-The exclusive *Sākya bāhās*
    - 10.7.1.3 *Bahi*- Monasteries
    - 10.7.1.4 *Than Bahi (Vikramśīla Mahāvihāra)*
  - 10.7.2 In Lalitpur
    - 10.7.2.1 A group of Sixteen principal monasteries.
    - 10.7.2.2 Sixteen *Bahi* Monasteries of Lalitpur
    - 10.7.2.3 Other Monasteries

- 10.7.2.3.1 Five Branch Monasteries of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*
- 10.7.2.3.2 Other Three Monasteries with *Cailaka Bhikṣu Saṅgha*
- 10.7.3.4 Branch Monasteries (*Kacā bāhā and Kacā bahi*)
- 10.7.3 In Bhaktapur
  - 10.7.3.1 In Madhyapur Thimi
- 10.8 Activities in Monasteries

## Chapter XI. The *Saṅgha*-the Functional unit of Monasticism and clergy

340 - 406

- 11.1 *Saṅgha*
- 11.2 *Saṅgha* types and *Newār Saṅgha*
- 11.3 *Saṅgha* members/Monks
- 11.4 Arrangement of Elders
- 11.5 *Saṅghakamma*
- 11.6 *Bāhā Saṅgha* in Kathmandu
- 11.7 *Bahi Saṅgha* in Kathmandu
- 11.8 *Saṅgha* in Lalitpur
- 11.9 *Bahi Saṅgha* in Lalitpur
- 11.10 *Saṅgha* in Bhaktapur
- 11.11 *Vajrācārya*, *Śākyas*, as the House holder monks
  - 11.11.1 *Śākyas*
  - 11.11.2 Interrelationship between *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*
  - 11.11.3 *Vajrācārya*
    - 11.11.3.1 Qualities of *Vajrācārya*
    - 11.11.3.2 Origin of *Vajrācārya*
  - 11.11.4 Monastic Identity of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*
- 11.12 Married clergy
  - 11.12.1 Liturgical or Sacerdotal Rituals
    - 11.12.1.1 Philosophy behind Rituals
    - 11.12.1.2 Esoteric rituals
- 11.13 *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Vajrācārya*- a status
- 11.14 *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*- the working *Buddhist* practitioners
- 11.15 Householder monk in *Buddhism*
  - 11.15.1 Householder monks in Nepal
  - 11.15.2 Motivation from *Jātakas* and *Avadāna*
- 11.16 *Buddhist* Laity
  - 11.16.1 Mercantile Laity
- 11.17 Life cycle rites/Sacraments

## 11.18 *Gyānmālā Bhajan*

# Chapter XII. Continuity and Changes in Monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

407 - 455

## 12.1 Major changes

### 12.1.1 Celibate to Non celibate monasticism

### 12.1.2 Change in ordination pattern

#### 12.1.2.1 Temporary celibacy

#### 12.1.2.2 Use of *Pañca-rakṣā* text as ritual tools

#### 12.1.2.3 Abandonment of *Upasampadā*

#### 12.1.2.4 Introduction of Higher Initiation (*Dekhā*)

### 12.1.3 Appearance of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya*

#### 12.1.3.1 Casteism

### 12.1.4 Disappearance of *Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha*

### 12.1.5 Esoteric to exoteric nature or vice versa

### 12.1.6 Change in guiding Buddhist sects

### 12.1.7 Co-residence among *Hinayānists* and *Mahāyānists*

### 12.1.8 Change in scholasticism

### 12.1.9 Scholastic to Ritualistic monasticism

### 12.1.10 Prevalence of Priestly function

### 12.1.11 Involvement of Monks in Life cycle rites

### 12.1.12 Quadri Gems in place of Triple Gems

### 12.1.13 Change in Monastic code

### 12.1.14 Hierarchy of tradition

### 12.1.15 Possession of private property

### 12.1.16 Shifting of Public Story telling Practice to *Gyānmālā Bhajan* singing

## 12.2 The Major *Buddhist* texts responsible for bringing about the changes in *Newār* Monasticism

## 12.3 Factors responsible for bringing about major changes

### 12.3.1 State patronage

### 12.3.2 *Mahāyāni/Vajrayāni* Ideals

### 12.3.3 Loss of contact with Indian Monastic centres

### 12.3.4 Loss of tenancy system

## 12.4 Factors responsible for growing apathy against *Newār Buddhism*

### 12.4.1 Impact of Himalayan Border closure on *Newār Buddhism*

#### 12.4.1.1 Himalayan impasse and border closure

### 12.4.2 Impact of *Theravada* movement and influence of Anglo-German view

### 12.4.3 Impact of modernization

**Chapter XIII. Conclusion and Recommendations**

456

Bibliography

Appendix

Figures

Maps

Tables

Photo Section



## LIST OF FIGURES, MAPS AND TABLES

	Page
Figure 1: A map showing <i>Nepal-maṇḍala</i> , the Kathmandu Valley	4
Figure 2: A map showing four surrounding mountains of <i>Nepal-maṇḍala</i>	150
Figure 3. <i>Buddha-maṇḍala</i> (diagrammatic)	146
Figure 4. <i>Dharma-maṇḍala</i> (diagrammatic)	151
Figure 5. <i>Saṅgha maṇḍala</i> (diagrammatic)	153
Figure 6. Sketches showing General Outlook of Nepalese monastery	309
Figure 7. Sketches showing a Typical Nepalese monastery	310
Figure 8. General Spacial planning of the Nepalese Monastery	316
Figure 9: A map showing a cluster of monasteries in a locality with Patan Durbar at the centre	318
Table 1. showing short details on <i>Saptatathāgata</i> according to <i>Swayambhūpurāṇa</i> .	148
Table 2. showing differences between <i>Bāhā</i> and <i>Bahi</i> monasteries	300
Table 3. Four principal Monasteries within <i>Thatu Pui</i> .	320
Table 4. Seven principal Monasteries within <i>Dathu Pui</i>	321
Table. 5 The only Principal Monastery of <i>Lāyaku Pui</i>	322
Table. 6 Principal Monasteries within <i>Dathu Pui</i>	323
Table. 7 Ten Monasteries having only <i>Śākya sangha</i> members	325
Table. 8 Sixteen <i>Bahi</i> Monasteries	326
Table. 9 Sixteen principal Monasteries of Patan	329-330
Table. 10 Two principal Monasteries of Kirtipur kept within Patan	330
Table. 11 Sixteen <i>Bahi</i> Monasteries of Patan	330-331
Table. 12 Five Branch Monasteries of <i>Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvivihāra</i>	332

Table. 13 Monasteries with <i>Cailaka Bhikṣu Saṅgha</i>	333
Table. 14 Monasteries in Bhaktapur at present	334-335
Table 15 Monasteries of Bhaktapur having no ordination program at present	336
Table 16. Monasteries of Thimi	336
Table 17. showing Ten sacraments, <i>Daśa karma</i> done in Buddhist way	403

### List of document copies in the Appendices

Annex A.	Daily rules in Sanskrit to be followed by <i>Ādikarmic Bodhisattva</i> , as mentioned in <i>Ādikarmic Pradeep</i> .
Annex B.	Chart on- “A topography of <i>Newār</i> Buddhist monasteries with example from Lalitpur”
Annex C.	Chart on “Principal characteristics serving to distinguish different types of the <i>Newār</i> Buddhist monasteries.”
Annex D.	The list of functions/activities carried out in <i>Newar</i> monasteries.
Annex E.	Monasteries lost in the history
Annex F.	List of thirty-four Buddhist schools compiled by Andre Bareau
Annex G.	The Qualities of an <i>Ācārya</i> on the basis of the <i>Ācāryakriyā samuccaya</i> of Jagaddarpana
Annex H.	Map of Lalitpur
Annex I.	Maplist of Monasteries in Lalitpur
Annex J.	Map of Kathmandu
Annex K.	Maplist of Monasteries in Kathmandu
Annex L.	Defunct Monasteries of Kathmandu
Annex M.	Map of Bhaktapur Bhaktapur Baha Bahi Map Heritage map of Bhaktapur city
Annex N.	Bhaktapur Map List

- Annex O. Monasteries in Sāṅkhu
- Annex P. Hand Sketches of a Nepalese Monastery and Caitya  
A model of a *vihāra* (source: Hodgson)  
A Caitya, popular in Nepal
- Annex Q. Questionnaires of Interview
- Annex R. A paragraph from *Cīvar-vastu* of *Mūlasarvāstivāda* describing how a householder was treated as the monastic(monk)
- Annex S. *Dāna-gāthā* with highlight on mention of *Ārya-saṅgha*
- Annex T. Photos

### List of Photographs in the Appendices

- Photo 1. Aunts of the neophytes collecting in dishes hair cut during ordination program of their niece.
- Photo. 2 Aunts of the neophytes carrying cut hair of their nieces, waiting for the rituals to be performed.
- Photo 3. A neophyte having his shaved but with top crest, being ready for further ritualized process of ordination.
- Photo 4. A novice boy receiving consecration from five elders (*sthavir ajus*) as a part of ordination program.
- Photo 5. A newly ordained monk boy under ceremonial umbrella, *Catra* while he was taking round of the city.
- Photo 6. Ordained monk boy holding *dharmagandhi* for beating it.
- Photo 7. Ordained monk boys given offering of rice bowl
- Photo 8. Ordained monk boys taken to procession in the city.
- Photo 9. A group of ordained monk boys
- Photo 10. Making of *Vajrācārya*. Ordained boy after disrobement ceremony undergoes ritualistic process of being *Vajrācārya* holding a *vajra* and a bell.
- Photo 11. *Vikramśīla Mahāvihāra* , *Tham Bahi*, Thamel, Kathmandu

- Photo 12. *Śrinaka Mahāvihāra* , *Lāyaku Bahi*, Pyaphal, Kathmandu
- Photo. 13. *Kanakacaitya Mahāvihāra* , *Jana Bāhā*, one of the most popular monastery of Kathmandu.
- Photo 14. *Bhāskarkiti Mahāvihāra* , *Yatkha Bāhā*, Kathmandu
- Photo 15. *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* , *Kwa Bāhā*, Lalitpur
- Photo 16. A Monastic boy attendant, Baphacha at *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*
- Photo 17. *Śivadeva Samskārita Bhāskarvarṇa Mahāvihāra* , *Oku Bāhā*, Lalitpur
- Photo 18. *Yasodhar Mahāvihāra* , *Bu Bāhā*, Lalitpur
- Photo 19. Buddhist monasteries of Bhaktapur
- Photo 20. Women participants of *Aṣṭami Vrata* at a monastery, *Musum Bāhā*, Kathmandu
- Photo 21. *Vajrāchārya Gurujus* performing rituals
- Photo 22. *Vajrāchārya Gurujus* reciting Buddhist *sūtras*
- Photo 23. *Ājus* (Elders) from three cities (Kathmandu, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur) witnessing a program of enthronement of *Mūla-cakreśvor* in *Ratnaketu Mahāvihāra*, *Jwā Bāhā*, Kathmandu.
- Photo 24. Distinguished persons making remark on the occasion of *Mūla-cakreśvor* enthronement program.
- Photo 25. *Cakreśvor* of Kathmandu
- Photo 26. *Cakreśvor* of Lalitpur
- Photo 27. Stone *caitya* replicas displayed at Hyatt Regency Hotel for guest attraction

## Introduction of the study Area- *NEPAL-MANḌALA*

*Nepal-maṇḍala* is currently known as ‘The Kathmandu Valley’. *Maṇḍala* is a circle, a mystic diagram of varied form, and in ancient Indian usage signified an administrative unit or a country. From at least the sixth century A.D., in conjunction with the word "Nepal", it signified to the Nepalese the Kathmandu Valley and surrounding territory.<sup>1</sup> Though *maṇḍala* may have different meaning, here it is used equivalent to country (*Rāstra*).<sup>2</sup> The word *Nepal-maṇḍala* was already in use during *Lichchavi* period as understood from *Gyaneśwar* inscription of Jayadeva II, but it became popular and widely used in medieval period. Many writers/scholars assumed that Nepal kingdom from the beginning of medieval period, was limited to Kathmandu Valley and its adjoining areas. It lies in the south close to the edge of the Tibetan Plateau. It culturally and historically represents Nepal.<sup>3</sup> So, they did not feel need of research outside the valley. But history has it that *Nepal-maṇḍala* included some regions outside the valley till beginning of early medieval period. It included several districts (*viṣayas*) within the valley and outside like Gulmagandi, Jiglodam, Pannag, Mangvara, Dhawalpur, Pañcavatadeśa in the west, Udayapur in the east and Pharping in the south. *Nepal-maṇḍala* consisted of two parts- central part, the Kathmandu valley governed by central government of the king and outer part mostly governed through *Viṣayapati* or *Mahāsāmantas* for the king.<sup>4</sup> In Medieval period those regions of outer part were either freed and became separate states or went under other influential rulers like *Khasa* rulers of Karnāli. During later medieval period, *Nepal-maṇḍala* was the spatial territory governed by *Malla* kings that covered the territory from Marsyāngdi River (Gorkha) in west to Dudhakoshi in east, Makawanpur-gadhi in south to Kerung in North.<sup>5</sup> And, *Nepal-maṇḍala* is now limited to the Kathmandu valley only and its

<sup>1</sup> Mary Shepherd Slusser, *Nepal Mandala*, Vol. I, (Kathmandu: Mandala Book Point, 1998), P.viii

<sup>2</sup> Dhanavajra Bajracharya, *Pūrvamadhyakālaka Abhilekha (Inscriptions of Early Medieval Period)*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Ra Ashiyāli Anusandhān Kendra, 2068 B.S), P. 20

<sup>3</sup> David Snellgrove, *Buddhist Himalaya*, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1957, (Kathmandu: Himalayan Book Sellers, 1995, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition), P. 91

<sup>4</sup> (i) Dhanavajra Bajracharya, *Gopālrajyaṃśāvalīko Aitihāsika Vivechana (Historical Analysis of Gopalraj-chronicle)*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Ra Ashiyāli Anusandhān Kendra, 2064 B.S), P. 15

(ii) Bajracharya, *Op.cit* (f.n. 2), Pp. 20-25

<sup>5</sup> Mrigendra Lal Singh, *Newā, Who, Where, How many and When ?*, (Kathmandu: Nepā Rāstriya Party, 2010 ), P. 26

adjoining districts like Sindhupālchowk, Kāvrepalānchowk, Makawānpur, Dhāding, Sindhuli, Rāmechāp, Dolakhā, Rasuwā and Nuwākot. But, at present *Nepal-maṇḍala* mainly denotes to Kathmandu valley where majority of *Newārs* inhabit and follow *Buddhism* directly or indirectly. For the purpose of present study, the valley is taken as *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

The Kathmandu valley is elliptical bowl in shape about fifteen miles in length and twelve miles in width. It lies at an average of four thousand five hundred feet above sea level and is surrounded by forested peaks up to nine thousand feet in height. The rich lacustrine deposits that fill the valley bottom have been eroded by its fast flowing monsoon rivers - particularly the Bāgmati and Biṣnumati - to form steep sided hills and ridges, some still covered by trees, that border the bands of terraced paddy fields.

The three cities of the valley dominate the life: Kathmandu proper in the west, Patan in the south and Bhaktapur in the east. Kathmandu, is now the center of the Valley's high density population. Traders and artisans still form a significant proportion of the urban inhabitants. Numerous small towns and villages are scattered between the three cities, sustaining the traditional agrarian economy of intense rice cultivation. The city areas are rapidly expanding in the valley where population increased more than four folds in two decades.

The city-dwellers are primarily *Newārs*, the aborigine inhabitants. *Newārs* were strongly indianized Mongols who migrated from the north or northeast and are predominantly *Buddhists*.<sup>6</sup> They belong to various ethnic groups who had come to settle permanently in the valley from different parts for centuries and adopted local culture, tradition and language that converted themselves into *Newārs*. In other words, whosoever settled in the valley, s/he became a *Newār*. Therefore, the term "*Newārs*" does not identify to certain particular community or ethnic group only; it is an integrated society of many ethnic groups living together in harmony. Eminent British scholar, Brian H. Hodgson who stayed in Nepal for 24 years and conducted pioneering research work on Nepalese *Buddhism* mentions that "*Buddhism* has been preserved since its establishment period in Nepal proper (*Nepal-maṇḍala*), as a dominant force preventing others mainly *Hindus*. Later, *Buddhists* fleeing from

---

<sup>6</sup> Dor Bahadur Bista, *People of Nepal*, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2000 AD), P. 19

*Brāhmanical* bigotry in India also joined the *Buddhists* of Nepal proper around 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD. *Buddhists* were clearly mentioned as prior settlers with dense and cultivated population in Kathmandu valley. Religion of *Newārs* is mentioned as *Buddhism* which existed well among the people, ancient *Hindu* immigrants and modern *Hindu* conquerors (rulers).<sup>7</sup>” Nepalese *Buddhism* is unanimously depicted by eminent scholars like Hodgson, Rajendra Ram, Gellner etc., as ***Newār Buddhism***. This is the acceptable view to almost all scholars. Otherwise, today, *Nepalese Buddhism* may mean all forms of *Buddhism* available in Nepal covering *Buddhism* of Northern Nepal, recently revived *Theravāda Buddhism* and *Newār Buddhism*. But, *Nepalese Buddhism* is always represented by *Newār Buddhism*.

Though *Newār* community is a minor group with population about one million, they gave the Nepal valley its special character for they have long been the cultural elite of the country. The *Newār* people dominated the Valley for most of its history; they created the beauty of its traditional architecture and plastic arts; they accumulated wealth through trade; and they established its reputation amongst the Himalayan peoples as a society small in size yet immense in human spirit. As most of the scholars did, the term *Nepalese Buddhism* or *Newār Buddhism* is taken to refer to *Buddhist* religion of heartland and centre of Nepal and to the particular form of *Buddhism* developed in the tiny Kathmandu valley, the *Nepal-maṇḍala*.<sup>8</sup>

Religiously, the Kathmandu valley as *Nepal-maṇḍala* is stated to have the form of a *maṇḍala* of *Cakrasaṃvara*, the most important *Buddhist* esoteric deity, and it encloses sites of *Aṣṭa-Bodhisattvas*, four great rivers (*Bāgmatī*, *Keśāvatī*, *Manirohinī*, and *Prabhāvatī*), twelve *tīrthas* (holy bathing places) and four holy mountains. It is identified as one of the system of Tantric Power Places spread around South Asia like others in Assām and Oddiyāna, now Swāt valley in Pakistan. The *maṇḍala* design was the basis of town planning in early medieval period.<sup>9</sup> Local *Buddhist* practitioners like *Vajrācāryas* often use the word *Nepal-*

---

<sup>7</sup> Brian H. Hodgson, *Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet*, (New Delhi: first published by Trubner & Co., 57 & 59 Ludgat Hill, London, 1874, Reprint Asian Educational Services, 1991)

<sup>8</sup> Siegfried Leinhard, “Nepal: The Survival of Indian *Buddhism* in a Himalayan Kingdom”, in *The World of Buddhism, Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich (Ed.), (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1984, Reprint 2007), P. 109

<sup>9</sup> David N. Gellner, *Monk, Householder and Tantric Priest*, (New Delhi: Foundation Books, by arrangement with Cambridge University Press UK, 1993), Pp. 190-192

*maṇḍala* in their rituals. In each and every *Buddhist* worship activity, first of all *Nepal-maṇḍala* is uttered and only after this, Kantipur, Latitpur and Bhaktapur are mentioned. It is thus evident that the use of *Nepal-maṇḍala* is prevalent since the ancient time to the present day. *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* since the ancient times to the present day has its own typical tradition, monasticism, culture, literature, rituals, art and so forth which are now the heritage and identity of Nepal.

The word *Nepal-maṇḍala* is chosen in the title in place of Kathmandu valley to denote to study area, in order to avoid possible confusion that may arise and to be more specific to the subject. *Nepal-maṇḍala* should give clear indication that it is related to the Traditional Nepalese practice. On the other hand, Kathmandu valley which is used in this modern age may give impression that its *Buddhism* is all existing types including newly revived or introduced traditions like *Theravāda* and *Tibetan*.

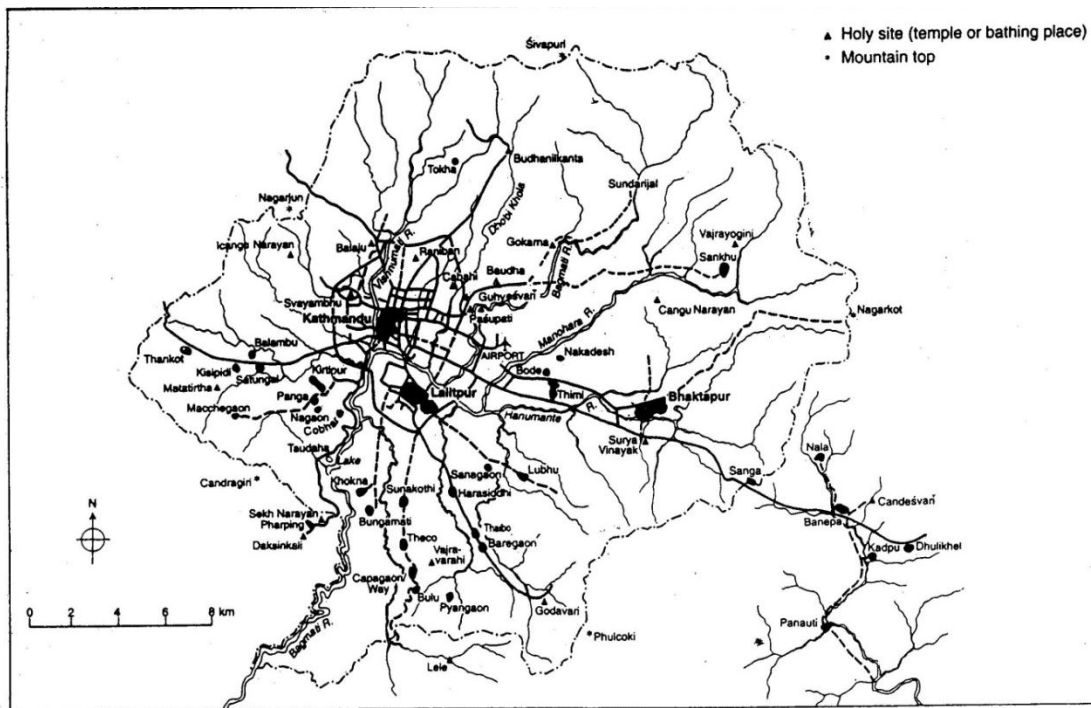


Figure 1: *Nepal-maṇḍala*, the Kathmandu Valley (Source: Niel Gutsow)



## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

### ‘Monasticism in Buddhism of *Nepal-Manḍala*: Continuity and Changes’

#### 1.1 Background of the study

Nepal should bear a meaningful existence for the Buddhists in the world as Jerusalem and Mecca do have for Christians and Muslims respectively. It is undoubtedly and scientifically proved that Nepal is the birth place of *Śākyamuni Buddha*. It stands out as the only country in the world where *Buddhism* started from the time of *Śākyamuni Buddha* and is continuing unabatedly even today. Importance of Nepal in the field of *Buddhism* is great not only because of the fact that it is the birth place of the *Buddha* but also due to several other aspects which are the specialties of only Nepal. These particularities also reflect upon the history of Buddhism in Nepal. One uniqueness of Nepalese *Buddhism* among several others lies in its form of monasticism that does not have celibate monks. Some observers are of opinion that there is no monasticism in Nepalese *Buddhism*. If so, a very striking question arises what and why numerous *Buddhist* monasteries which are still extant in Kathmandu valley stood for. What do they represent ? The valley is distinguishingly known for its old monasteries which attract scores of visitors/tourists even today. Every sensible person can easily assume these were not mere buildings. Design and structure of these monasteries also silently give clear indication that these must have been used for special purpose which could be non other than practice and propagation of *Dharma*.

*Saṅgha* has a great importance in *Buddhism*. *Saṅgha* literally means a group of practitioners of the *Dharma*, members of which follow a set of prescribed rules and regulations, synonymously known also as *Vinaya* or *prātimokṣa*. From historical point of view, the *Saṅgha* represents an institution. An institution, in anthropological language, is a group of people committed for some purpose,

following prescribed rules and forming a structure.<sup>10</sup> *Saṅgha* together with *Buddha* and *Dharma* are called *Tri-ratna* (Triple gems) upon which refuge is taken. It is an ancient tradition of the *Buddhists* to propagate the *Dharma* by establishing *Saṅgha*. And, the dwelling place of *Saṅgha* members is called a *vihāra* (Monastery) where they dedicate their life in the practice and propagation of the *Dharma*. Truly speaking monasticism comprises the activities exhibited by the *Saṅgha* members in a monastery towards the practice and propagation of the *Dharma*. Nepalese *Buddhists* also had followed the same age-old tradition. The monastery remains inclusive of all requisites needed for *Dharma* practice and its propagation. It generally consists of a large *Buddha* image, a rectangular courtyard for assembly and display of *Buddhist* articles in occasions, long rooms for *Dharma* teaching or preaching in the ground floor and rooms for further extensive practice of *Dharma*, storeroom etc in the first floor. Existence of numerous old monasteries is the indicative of the fact that Kathmandu valley is the strong hold of the *Buddhists*. *Buddhist* masters and *ācāryas* mostly dwell surrounding the monastery. They preach *Dharma* discourse, teach *Dharma* lessons and provide guidance to the lay followers. The lay followers throng into the nearby monastery for earning merit by listening to *Buddhist* masters or *ācāryas*, worshipping the *Buddhist* deities. It is also the monastery where the new comer or neophyte takes entrance into the *Saṅgha* as *Saṅgha* member initially being a monk taking *Pravajyā* (ordination). Unless one takes *Pravajyā* or ordination he is not considered the member of the *Saṅgha*. So, *Saṅgha* also denotes to a group of venerable ones who have undergone ordination with due faith and undertaken vows to comply by the prescribed rules. Otherwise, those who live the life according to *Buddhist* education or lesson with due faith are called *upāsaka* (male) or *upāsikā* (female). Thus, the monastery is also the centre of *Dharma* practice by the fully ordained *Buddhist* initiates, their socio-cultural accomplishment and teaching learning activities. All these chores along with monasteries concerned make up monasticism. So, the monastery occupies vital position in the *Buddhist* tradition for the formation of *Saṅgha* besides its use as lodging for *Buddhist* masters, place for socio-cultural activities and spiritual practice. There are more than 400 ancient monasteries-*Mahāvihāras* (*Bāhā* and *Bahis*)<sup>11</sup> related to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* in Kathmandu

---

<sup>10</sup> Sukumar Dutt, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India, Their History and Their Contribution to Indian Culture*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt Ltd, 1988), P. 23

<sup>11</sup> John K. Locke, *Buddhist Monasteries of Kathmandu Valley, -a survey of the Bāhās and Bahis of the Kathmandu Valley*, (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Press Pvt. Ltd., 1985), P. 531. He mentioned 363

valley and some 96 (51 in Kathmandu Valley and 45 outside the valley) *Vihāra* related to *Theravādi* tradition. Number of *Gompas*<sup>12</sup> (*Buddhist* Monasteries of Himalayan *Buddhism* based on Tibetan style) is approximately 4000. Thus, though small in size Nepal has comparatively and surprisingly a good number of *Buddhist* Monasteries (*Vihāra* and *Mahāvihāra*) and *gompas* which serve as the teaching grounds for the *Buddhist* learners.<sup>13</sup> Since, the present topic has to deal with the monasticism in indigenous Nepalese *Buddhism*<sup>14</sup> which is also known as *Newār Buddhism*, only old monasteries-*Bāhā* and *Bahi* are being focused here.

The present situation or remnant of Nepalese *Buddhism* is the result of continuous practice from the ancient past. It rolled unabatedly as snow ball assimilating and being accustomed to the surrounding in due course of time and took the present form. It flourished to the peak in medieval period. It never vanished as in India where it first got rooted. Prof. Richard F. Gombrich of Oxford University opines that *Newār Buddhism* is the only *Buddhism* which can claim direct continuity with the *Buddhism* which existed in medieval India before its virtual elimination as the result of *Muslim* conquest.<sup>15</sup> John C. Huntington of Ohio State University mentions that *Buddhist* soteriological methodologies still current among the *Newārs* of the Kathmandu Valley were also practiced in Bengal of the ninth through twelfth centuries suggesting a close relationship between practices in Bengāl and those in

---

institutions, 17 defunct *vihāra* in Kathmandu Valley and neighbouring sides. He also mentioned more than 90 ancient *vihāras* which no more exist now but from contemporary sources.

<sup>12</sup> Narendra Kumar Gurung, in his article "Present Situation of Nepalese Gumbas" in the souvenir magazine, *Gumbā Byabasthā Tathā Vikāsh Samitiko Smārikā-7*, (Souvenir-7 of Gumba Management & Development Committee 2060), P.02

<sup>13</sup> Surendra Man Bajracharya, "Nepal-Prime Buddhist Destination", an unpublished M.A thesis submitted to Central Department of Buddhist Studies, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu 2062

<sup>14</sup> Today, following three types of *Buddhism* are prevalent in the kingdom of Nepal.

(1) *Theravāda*- Stereotype of Myanmar or Sri Lankan or Thai *Buddhism*-This is sustained by the celibate monks and nuns in yellow robes. This is being supported by Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand. (2) *Buddhism* of Northern Nepal or Himalayan *Buddhism*, also known sometimes as *Lamaism*-Actually, this is the *Tibetan Buddhism* adopted by the people residing in the Himalayan belt of Nepal and their descendents in Kathmandu. After the takeover of Tibet by China in 1959 most of the Buddhist masters along with their followers came to Kathmandu and this became popular. *Tibetan Buddhism* is thus being survived in Nepal. (3) Traditional Nepalese *Buddhism*: This is the indigenously flourished *Buddhism* having Nepalese flavour and essence which are unmatched in the world. Some distinguish it as *Newār Buddhism* as most of the followers are from *Newār* community.

<sup>15</sup> Gregory Sharkey, *Buddhist Daily Ritual, The Nitya Pūjā in Kathmandu Valley Shrines*, (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2001), Pp. xi-xii

the Kathmandu Valley.<sup>16</sup> Though the scholars as above claim *Newār Buddhism* to be the continuity of Indian form of *Vajrayāna* tradition that existed in medieval India specially from Bengal side, however it has developed its peculiar characteristics which are one of a remarkable kind in the *Buddhist* history. It is noticeable that *Newār Buddhism* possesses quite a number of indigenous elements, which are not to be found in Indian *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. Now that *Mahāyāna Buddhism* has disappeared from India, *Newār Buddhism* found in Kathmandu valley represents one of the few traditions in the world which has retained features inherited directly from India. One of the major factors for the continuity of *Buddhism* in Nepal is its unique nature and structure of Nepalese *Buddhism*. Some took it in negative way calling it as corrupt practice of *Buddhism* while some other in positive way praising it as the best preservation of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* though in ritualistic form, in the world. The scholars present the view that the monasteries in Kathmandu and the practice there in give the reminiscence of those practiced in great monasteries like Nālandā and Vikramśīla *Buddhist* monasteries (Universities). Today, Nepalese *Buddhism* is vividly known as *Ritual Buddhism*, *Newār Buddhism*, *Buddhism* without monks. It is called *Ritual* or *ritualistic Buddhism* as some scholars held view that it is basically survived in the form of rituals. It is called *Newār Buddhism* as its adherents are mostly *Newārs*- aboriginal dwellers of *Nepal-maṇḍala* (the Kathmandu Valley). "Now-a-days the term Nepalese has a far wider significance, indeed almost a changed meaning, but when one speaks of Nepalese, it can only mean *Newār*". Today, the term *Newār* (or *Newāh*) stands for a group of people. However, if we see the Nepalese history, we will find that the terms '*Newār*' and '*Nepal*' have been used interchangeably. At present, its *Sanḡha* consists of no celibate monks as its philosophy put less stress upon celibate monkism or austerity rather it gives importance to practicality. Hence, it stands out as unique type of *Buddhism* in the world being the *Buddhism* without monks. It gives good example as to how *Buddhism* can be practised without being celibate monk or without presence of celibate monks. With some rectification, practicality of Buddhism of *Nepal-maṇḍala* may be recommendable for all the enthusiastic *Buddhists* in this modern world of 21st century. Adherents or practitioners do not wear except in occasions, apparently distinguishable monastic robes as the present monks do and they do not follow celibacy. On these ground, some persons raised question on them and argued that they did not follow

---

<sup>16</sup> John C. Huntington, Dina Wangdel and Robert AF Thurman, *The Circle of Bliss*, (Chicago: Serindia Publication Inc., 2003)

monasticism. Nepalese *Buddhism* was compelling popular tradition that motivated householders to support the monastic elite and to commit themselves to taking refuge in the *Tri-ratna* (Triple gems); the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* (teachings), and the *Saṅgha* (monastic order). Most *Buddhists* have been farmers, artisans, or merchants, not monks or intellectuals. Nepalese *Buddhism* also gave ample example of how they were accommodated in monastery and contributed to monasticism.

It seems no scientific work is done in this field except tracing the history of *Buddhism* in Nepal. The importance of the present work lies in knowing and analyzing monasticism of Nepalese *Buddhism*.

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

Unless proper identification and study of monasticism in Nepalese *Buddhism* are made, all other questions related to *Buddhism* in Nepal remain unanswered. Research work on this can not proceed well if this is lacking. Does monasticism exist in Nepalese *Buddhism* (*Newār Buddhism*)? If not, what are the uses of so many old monasteries still extant in Kathmandu Valley? Do the existing *Vihāras*/monasteries and the practice and the *Saṅgha* structure there-in comprise the monasticism of Nepalese *Buddhism* (*Newār Buddhism*)?. Most *Buddhists* have been farmers, artisans, or merchants, but not celibate monks or intellectuals. How these were accommodated in monasteries and contributed to monasticism ?. What are the bases of Nepalese version of monasticism ?. An attempt is made here to know and analyze intricacies of Nepalese *Buddhism* so that disputed rumours on the subjects can be settled.

## 1.3 Aims and objectives of the study

General:

1. To highlight concept of monasticism in religious traditions.
2. To trace the history of monasticism in Nepal,
3. To explore and trace sources of unique features of Nepalese monasticism, which are highlighted as the special features and particularities of Nepalese *Buddhism*, but are often contentious drawing a lot of criticism.

Specific:

1. To study and analyze Monasticism in Nepalese *Buddhism*.
2. To evaluate the status of Monasticism in Nepalese *Buddhism*.
3. To high light continuity and major changes in *Buddhist* monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

#### 1.4 Literature Review

This is the preliminary literature review made at the time of submission of research proposal. Detailed literature review done and submitted separately to the concerned authority, as per the rule of the University is presented under separate chapter entitled Literature Review.

Information on the subject are scattered in different books, journals and also in the form of public hearsays and belief. Books, Journals and any other publications having the information on the *Buddhism* of Nepal have to be thoroughly studied. While going through the relevant texts, priority has been given to the publications of indigenous Nepalese writers/scholars. In the famous book entitled “*Licchavīkālko Abhilekha*” the eminent author and historian Mr. Dhana Bajra Bajracharya, while mentioning and explaining the meaning of the oldest known *Cābahil* inscription<sup>17</sup> in the very first chapter, proved the existence of *Buddhist Bhikṣu Saṅgha* before 4<sup>th</sup> century. The inscription which is believed to be older than Mānadeva’s Changu Narayan inscription of 464 AD, shows how the *Saṅgha* was then run as evidenced by mention of donation of land by a lady to the *Saṅgha*. N.M. Bajracharya has critically discussed the *Buddhist* history of period 465BC to 1199AD covering the rule of *Kirānt* and *Licchavī* kings in his book “*Buddhism in Nepal*”. Similarly, H.L. Singh has presented introductory history of *Buddhism* in his book “*Buddhism in Nepal*”. In another books with the same title, Pt. Badri Ratna Bajracharya and Mr. Min Bahadur Shakya separately have given mythological account and mentioned visit of different *Chinese Buddhist* scholars to Nepal respectively. Script analyst Mr. Hem Raj Shakya has mentioned importance and uniqueness of *Svayambhū Mahāchaitya* and its role in Nepalese *Buddhist* practice in his book in *Newārī* language *Svayambhū Mahāchaitya* which was later

---

<sup>17</sup> Dhana Bajra Bajracharya, *Licchavīkālako Abhilekha (Inscriptions of Licchavī period)*, (Kirtipur: CNAS, 2030 BS, 2nd reprint 2053 BS), Pp. 1-8

translated into English by Mr. Min Bahadur Shakya. Nonetheless, other related publications can not be neglected. Regarding this, the books of Merry Slusser, David N. Gellner and Daniel Wright in the title *Nepal-maṇḍala*<sup>18</sup>, *Monk, Householder and Tāntric Priest*<sup>19</sup>, and *History of Nepal*<sup>20</sup> respectively also have some important information on the *Buddhist* practice of Nepal.

John C. Huntington, Dina Wangdel and Robert A.F Thurman mentioned some of the features of *Newār Buddhism* in their joint work ‘*The Circle of Bliss*’ while dealing with *Buddhist* art of Nepal. In the same book, co-author, John C. Huntington of Ohio State University mentions that *Buddhist* soteriological methodologies still current among the *Newārs* of the Kathmandu Valley were also practiced in Bengal of the ninth through twelfth centuries suggesting a close relationship between practices in Bengal and those in the Kathmandu Valley.<sup>21</sup> Gregory Sharkey, has thrown light on the Daily monastic practice of Nepalese *Buddhists* elucidating the examples of the *Buddhist* practice still observed at *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* (Golden Temple) of Lalitpur in his text *Buddhist Daily Ritual, The Nitya Pūjā in Kathmandu Valley Shrines*.<sup>22</sup> Todd T. Lewis in his ‘*Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal- Narratives and Rituals of Newār Buddhism*’<sup>23</sup>, gave descriptions of some practices of *Newār Buddhism*. John K Locke has meticulously enlisted monasteries (*Bāhā* and *Bahī*) along with their short introductory descriptions indicating the practice therein in his text ‘*The Buddhist monasteries of Kathmandu Valley*’.<sup>24</sup> Shanker Thapa has compiled and edited different articles on the practice of Nepalese *Buddhism* in Nepal in his texts ‘*Newār Buddhism, History, Scholarship and Literature*’<sup>25</sup> and ‘*Historical Context of Newār Buddhism, The Vajrayāna Tradition of Nepal*’<sup>26</sup>.

---

<sup>18</sup> Slusser, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 1)

<sup>19</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9)

<sup>20</sup> Daniel Wright, *History of Nepal*, (Delhi: Adarsh Enterprises, 2000 A.D)

<sup>21</sup> Huntington et. al, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 16)

<sup>22</sup> Sharkey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 15)

<sup>23</sup> Todd T. Lewis, ‘*Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal- Narratives and Rituals of Newār Buddhism*’, (Albany, State University of New York Press, 2000)

<sup>24</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11)

<sup>25</sup> Shanker Thapa, ‘*Newār Buddhism, History, Scholarship and Literature*’, (Lalitpur, Nagarjuna Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2005)

<sup>26</sup> Shanker Thapa, ‘*Historical Context of Newār Buddhism, The Vajrayāna Tradition of Nepal*’, (Lalitpur: Nagarjuna Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2005)

In most of the available books the writers have tried to give account of *Buddhism* in Nepal in their own way but no one attempted to explain properly intrinsic features of Nepalese *Buddhism* stressing upon changing monastic tradition. So, the present work should be the first of its kind in this regard and should have its own importance.

### 1.5 Significance of the study

The subject should be interesting to the educated public in our country and abroad. Curiosity about our ancient *Buddhist* past is now more widely diffused. *Buddhism* thrived and made headway in Nepal as a religion of the people – a religion that was not a practice of celibate monk-hood. Isolation from the society was never the cue of *Buddhist* monasticism. As stated above the history of *Buddhist* monasticism at a place is virtually the history of *Buddhist Saṅgha* in that place. Both these monasticism and *Buddhist Saṅgha* have also an abstract aspect in which they are regarded as spiritual entity. The history of *Buddhism* in Nepal is incomplete and one-sided if we consider it as only theoretical or speculative system without bringing into integration as the system of tribal, national or voluntarily associated life.

The dissertation will be helpful to interested readers of the subject as it tries to explore and evaluate the available present literatures/sources. The dissertation will also be important in one way or the other in evaluating the status of Nepal from the view point of its unique monastic practice.

It has valuable significance in the present situation of Nepal. Tourism is the main source of income for Nepal. It is the necessity of the country to attract foreigners. And, *Buddhism* is another field of Nepal upon which the country could be proud of. As the main aim of this dissertation is to point out the uniqueness of the country enlisting, discussing and highlighting the specialties and particularities of Nepal in *Buddhism* focusing on the monasticism. If this aim is achieved in real practice, Nepal can draw remarkable number of pilgrim tourists and *Buddhist* students from all over the world.

---



Furthermore, Nepalese monastic practice is full of controversies specially regarding four days apparent monkhood, omission of *upasampadā* in ordination program, practice in house hold setting, sacrilegious food behaviour, caste based monastic structure etc. which often draw flak. Criticism prevailed mainly due to lack of knowledge. The current study delves in analysis of those customs and tried to find their roots. Thus, the research work will also be helpful in understanding indigenous *Buddhism* of Nepal by settling disputes on the analytical standpoints that answer a number of interrogations against it, some even advocating it as corrupt *Buddhist* practice.

### 1.6 Limitation of the study

The present work is focused mainly on the field of *Buddhism* by evaluating and highlighting the monasticism of Nepalese *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* is also known outside Nepal as *Newār Buddhism*. So, it is in fact the study of monasticism of *Newār Buddhism*. It is not intended in any way to give the total account of *Buddhism* in Nepal or a part there of. So, it does not cover the details of monasticism of other forms of *Buddhism* prevalent in Nepal i.e. *Theravāda Buddhism* and *Tibetan Buddhism* etc.

Furthermore, the study includes some public hearsay and belief which are difficult to have had scientifically verified. However, effort is made to give scientific approach as far as possible.

### 1.7 Research Methodology

To achieve the objectives of the study, careful attention is given in following validated and approved research methodology. The study is based on descriptive, explorative and analytical methods. Effort is made to obtain a clear picture and understanding of Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. This research also has the researcher's personal experience of having some *Buddhist* knowledge to some extent as he is one of the members of *Buddhist* monastic system prevalent in Nepal and he, himself had witnessed some of its parts. This has also contributed to writing of the dissertation. Except theoretical overview based on desk work, field visits are also made to get reliable data and information including photographs

when required. Thus, observation is another important method used to collect information. The researcher observed various rites and rituals and ceremonies that were performed in the monastic premises during the research period and collected relevant information. The research work was conducted on the basis of collection of data and information from two major sources i.e. primary and secondary sources. The primary sources included the information received from concerned parties, intellectuals, monks, field visits. However, unstructured interviews were adopted as and when required. The National archive and Lotus Research Centre also provided some primary information. Secondary sources include various sources like newspapers, journal articles, magazines, books, chronicles, internet web-sites, published and unpublished theses etc. Secondary sources used have been verified to authenticate the information received through observation to bring out plausible exposition on textual basis. Required data were collected from various libraries, *Buddhist* monasteries, National archive and texts in private collections. Personal views and judgments are avoided unless verified with evidences. Method of data collection was more qualitative than quantitative. These sources of information have supported the interpretation and analysis of various themes pertinent to *Newār Buddhist* monasticism.

The researcher acknowledges his indebtedness to his predecessors who have worked in the field of Nepalese *Buddhism* through selection for Literature review, citation in footnotes, and reference. Standard MLA method as approved by Central Department of *Buddhist* Studies, is applied for foot note citation and reference preparation. For easy presentation, required drawings, or sketches, photographs have been provided.

## 1.8 Chapter Scheme:

Chapterization has been done as the research work demanded to meet its objectives. The dissertation is divided into thirteen chapters. Each chapter has subheadings to include sub chapters which consist of the subject matters to be dealt with. Ten major chapters from Chapter III to XII comprise the main body of the dissertation while other three chapters, Chapter I, Chapter II and Chapter XIII are Introduction, Literature review and Conclusion respectively. The chapters and the contents are as follows.

## **Chapter I. Introduction**

This chapter gives information on the subject of the dissertation, its importance, background of the study, aims and objectives, a short review of literature, methodology applied, and significance of the study. The entire project work is based on the details given in this chapter. The subheadings included in this chapter are- Back-ground of study, Statement of the problem, Aims & Objectives of study, Literature Review, Significance of Study, Limitation of study, Research Methodology, Chapter Scheme, Time Schedule, Language of the research work etc.

## **Chapter II. Literature Review**

This chapter consists of analytical review of some important works by eminent scholars pertaining to *Buddhist* monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. As per the current rule of Dean's Office, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, detailed reviews of five texts and five journal articles were done and submitted to the authority. These reviews were examined by concerned experts through the Central Department of *Buddhist* Studies, Kirtipur. The points commented by the experts were carefully considered and necessary correction was done as suggested for the final acceptance. The same reviews are included in the chapter II.

## **Chapter III. Concept of Monasticism in Religious Practices**

In this chapter, various definition and concept of monasticism in various religions are discussed. Mainly monasticism in *Christianity*, *Hinduism*, *Islam* and *Jainism* are shortly introduced. The chapter is devoted to highlight the importance of monasticism in religious practices.

## **Chapter IV. *Buddhist* Monasticism**

In this chapter, monasticism in *Buddhism* is highlighted dealing with monastic components or criteria of monasticism, like Triple gems, monastery, *Saṅgha*, monks, monastic codes, councils etc.

## **Chapter V. Historical Development of *Buddhist* Monasticism**

This chapter is devoted to historical development of monasticism from the period of *Śākyamuni Buddha* to present modern period dividing the time period into five

phases like Pre-classical or Formative period, Classical Period, Semi classical Period, Medieval Period and Modern Period.

#### **Chapter VI. *Buddhist* Monasticism in the context of *Nepal-maṇḍala***

This chapter has details on monasticism followed in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, mainly with description of its components in Nepalese context.

#### **Chapter VII. History of Monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala***

This chapter deals with history of monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala* in chronological order, dividing the time period into Mythological period, Ancient Period - Formative period including *Kirāntī Period* and *Lichchavī Period*, Medieval period, and Modern Period.

#### **Chapter VIII. Sectarian Influences-the evolutionary factors and Development of *Mahāyāna***

In this chapter, sectarian influences on Nepalese monasticism have been evaluated. Mainly two *Buddhist* sects *Mahāsāṃghikā* and *Sarvāstivāda* are taken into consideration and their impact on *Buddhist* monasticism has been analyzed and discussed. Also included in the chapter is account on development of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in Nepal.

#### **Chapter IX. Monastic Life-style**

Details about monastic life style are given in this chapter. Admission of monastics into monastic community, their daily routine, regular or monthly, annual and occasional activities are described.

#### **Chapter X. Monastery-the Architectural tradition in Monasticism**

In this chapter, Nepalese monasteries, their types and purposes are described. It gives a short distribution pattern of monasteries in three major cities of Kathmandu valley, highlighting their sacredness, social connectivity etc.

#### **Chapter XI. The *Saṅgha*-The Functional unit of Monasticism and clergy**

This chapter has the description of monastic people of *Nepal-maṇḍala*, their types, their organization, the *Saṅgha*, *Saṅghakamma*. In this chapter an attempt is made to trace origination of householder monks and their present status in Buddhism of

*Nepal-maṇḍala*. It also discusses the monastic identity of *Saṅgha* members and status of *Buddhist* laity.

## **Chapter XII. Continuity and Changes in Monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala***

This chapter consists of discussion on major changes in *Buddhist* monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. It also highlights continuity of monasticism. Actually, major changes mentioned and discussed in preceding chapters in scattered pattern have been put together and enumerated in this chapter. The chapter also deals with the factors responsible for bringing about the changes in monasticism and factors responsible for growing apathy against *Newār Buddhism* inducing changes.

## **Chapter XIII. Conclusion and recommendation**

This is the concluding chapter which evaluates present *Buddhist* monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala* on the basis of descriptions and analysis done in the preceding chapters. Based upon the study and findings, recommendations are also drawn and given in this chapter.

## **Appendices**

In support of the issues in the chapters, maps, diagrams, photographs are given in appendices or in other appropriate pages.

### **1.9 Language of the Research work**

The language of the present research work presentation is chosen popular language, English though the incumbent is not the English speaker, so that it could reach to maximum number of readers. Since the account is meant for the general readers interested in *Buddhist* studies, an effort has been made to minimize the use of specific *Buddhist* technical terms as far as possible. However, it will not be practically possible to avoid entirely the use of *Buddhist* terminology as such an attempt often makes the phraseology awkward and clumsy. As writing was done in English, non English words which are mostly either *Saṅskrit* or *Pāli* or local vernacular *Newārī* or *Nepali* or *Tibetan* are italicized and dialectically marked for easy identification.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

The information on the subject matter are scattered in different texts, journals, research articles etc. There is no text written solely on the monasticism of *Nepalese Buddhism*. So, there is a need of exploring the available texts, journals etc. which have some relevant information on the subject. Some native writers have written history of *Buddhism* in Nepal but they have not given space for monasticism. *Nepalese Buddhism* being basically a *vajrayānic* form, monasticism is not apparently seen. It is embedded in the bosom of socio-cultural complexes and seems somewhat mysterious. This Mysterious veil should be removed in the light of modern advancement. Though *Nepalese Buddhism* is viewed as one of the important aspects of *Buddhism*, which is believed to be the only remnant of once dominantly existed type in Bengāl and Bihār, it is now surviving only in Nepal in South Asia.

Importance of Nepal in the field of *Buddhism* is great not only because of the fact that it is the birth place of the *Buddha* but also due to several other aspects which are the specialties and particularities of only Nepal. One of the uniqueness of *Nepalese Buddhism* lies in its form of monasticism. There are more than 400 old monasteries-*Mahāvihāras* and *Vihāras* (*Bāhā* and *Bahis*)<sup>27</sup> related to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* in Kathmandu valley and some 96 (51 in Kathmandu Valley and 45 outside the valley) *Vihāras* related to *Theravādi* tradition. Number of *Gompas*<sup>28</sup> (*Buddhist Monasteries of Himalayan Buddhism* based on Tibetan style) is approximately 4000, of which only about 1600 are registered in Gompa Management and Development Committee, a Government body. Thus, though small in size Nepal has comparatively and surprisingly a large number of *Buddhist Monasteries* (*Vihāra* and *Mahāvihāra*) and *gompas* where monasticism is practised. Since, the present topic has to deal with the monasticism in indigenous *Nepalese*

---

<sup>27</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11)

<sup>28</sup> Gurung, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 12)

*Buddhism* which is also known as *Newār Buddhism*, only old monasteries-*Bāhā* and *Bahi* come under consideration here.

It seems no proper work is done in this field except mentioning the names of the *Vihāras* which are still extant in the valley or those which have already disappeared. Some scholars have explored the rituals observed in particular monasteries and some went to the extent of studying *Saṅgha* activities of a particular place. Nowhere descriptions of monasticism of *Nepalese Buddhism* are adequately given in *Buddhist* literature. The importance of the present work lies in knowing the monasticism of *Nepalese Buddhism* and bringing into light its chief features so that disputes leveled against it can be justfully analyzed in convincing way. For this and also as a part of process according to university rule for dissertation writing, four books which are best known to have been written on the subjects of *Newār Buddhism* were selected among several published works for critical Literature review. The books chosen are internationally renowned texts which are known to be authorized ones for knowing *Newār Buddhism*. Review on them is done at length along with the short biographies of the writers. The authors of these books have been successful in establishing themselves as among the authorities of the subject. Their biographies reveal writers' command over the subject. An attempt is also made here to review their work and trace out their view on the monasticism of *Newār Buddhism*.

The writers of all these texts are of foreign origin. However, the author of *Karuṇāmaya*, John K. Locke can be considered as native as he spent his whole life until his death in Nepal recently. Writings of other native writers are still awaited in this field of study. But, those who have penned on *Newārs* have spared years of time in Nepal for their research.

Also reviewed herewith are five selected research articles which are best known in the field of *Buddhist* Studies, as the reliable source to comprehend *Newār Buddhism*. In these articles penned by the eminent research scholars of today, the concerned authors have made critical analysis of some of the prominent debatable issues pertinent to *Newār Buddhism*, which are related to monasticism. Reviewed texts and research articles are presented herewith in separate categories according to chronological order of publication of the works.

2.1 Brian H. Hodgson, *Essays on the languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet, together with further papers in Geography, Ethnology, and Commerce of those countries*, (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1991), (first published by London, Trubner and Co., 1874).

Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800-1894)<sup>29</sup>, is known to the *Buddhist* world as a research scholar. This name is honoured in *Buddhist* English literature for his valuable information on Nepal and *Nepalese Buddhism*. *Nepalese Buddhism* is very much indebted to Brian H. Hodgson for being taken into lime light and introduced to Asian and European communities. He is established as a concrete Pillar of *Nepalese Buddhism* through his pioneering work. Though he belonged to non *Buddhist* society, he made laudable contribution to *Buddhism*. In this regards, he stands as an example that with keen interest in the subject, to what extent a man can contribute to the subject of his interest. The life of Brian H. Hodgson is remarkable in the history of Nepal not only as British Resident envoy to Nepal but also for his exposition of the vast wealth of *Saṅskrit Buddhist* literature of Nepal.

The title of the book '*Essays on the languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet, together with further papers in Geography, Ethnology, and Commerce of those countries*' itself reveals almost all its contents which are divided into two parts. The first part consisted of *Chapters* on the languages, literature, and religions of Nepal and Tibet while the second part has details on geography of Himalaya, the inhabiting people, some special tribes of Nepal like *Chepang* and *Kusunda*, commerce of Nepal and a note on the colonization of the Himalaya by Europeans. Actually the book is the collection of some important scholarly research papers written by Mr. Hodgson, most of which already had appeared in various journals and magazines. Since all these subjects do not bear concern with present research work, only first part which is devoted to the people and religion of Nepal is studied and reviewed.

In the beginning, of the *Chapter* '*The Language of Nepal, Introduction of Nepal and Tibet*' he concentrated on Nepaul (Nepal proper) as the country of *Newārs*, which has long been the metropolis of *Gorkhāli* power. Hodgson remarks that the

---

<sup>29</sup> David M Waterhouse(Ed.), *The Origins of Himalayan Studies: Brian Houghton Hodgson in Nepal and Darjeeling 1820-1858*, (London and New York: Routledge Curzon, 2005)



*Newārī* language of Nepaul (throughout the book, Nepal is termed as Nepaul) is never materially impressed by the fashionable and facile *Parbattia*. Religion of *Newārs* is mentioned as *Buddhism* which existed well among the people, ancient *Hindu* immigrants and modern *Hindu* conquerors (rulers), and it has been preserved since its establishment period in Nepal proper, as a dominant force preventing others mainly *Hindus*. Later, *Buddhists* fleeing from *Brāhmanical* bigotry in India also joined the *Buddhists* of Nepal proper around 2 to 3 century AD. *Buddhists* were clearly mentioned as prior settlers with dense and cultivated population in Kathmandu valley. Hodgson puts forth the view that though it is difficult to give chronological order of the events, it is apparent that *Sakavans* came to Nepal when Kapila was destroyed by the king of Kosala. Here, *Sakavans* must be the *Śākyavansa* who fled to Kathmandu Valley to escape the massacre and atrocity of Vidhudhaka, the king of Kosala. The incidence took place following the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of the *Buddha*.

Hodgson also compared *Buddhism* of Nepal and Tibet as population of both was principally *Baudha* and the religion *Vajrayāna*. Connection of language of Nepal proper with that of Tibet, was also discussed with their affinity. Both have a great bulk of the literature related to the *Buddhist* religion.

In the *Chapter* with heading '*Literature of Nepaul*', the principal literary works are mentioned to be available in larger monasteries in Tibet while other numerous books of inferior pretensions are also available in Kathmandu. These books are from the prior traffickers and monks who annually visit Nepaul on account of religion and trade. Hodgson highlights annual sojourners from Tibet in Nepal, were in hundreds to pay their devotion at *Svayambhū* in Kathmandu.

Citing a reference from *Pūjākhanda*, it is mentioned that *sūtras* and the *Buddhist* scriptures of *Mahāyāna* are regarded as *Dharma Ratna* meaning '*the words of the Buddha*'. Also mentioned is categorization of *Buddhavacana* (words of the *Buddha*, depicting *sūtra* as *Mūla grantha* (chief books). Hodgson remarks that *Nava grantha* or nine texts is the most popular one among the *Boudha* writings of Nepal. Among these nine texts, *Aṣṭa Sāhashrikā Prajñāpārāmitā* or *Rakṣā Bhagawati* is the most important and is of philosophical type while the rest eight are of the narrative kind. Another important text of Nepal is *Sambhu Purāṇa* (*Svayambhū Purāṇa*) which he collected in large proportion. He mentions that

*Buddhism* flourished in Nepal till the period of *Sankara* (*Śankarācārya*) which he placed in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. It is also remarkably mentioned that divine worship is constantly offered to the *Nava Dharma* by the Nepalese *Buddhists*. Hodgson also exclaims pride in having been the first to discover and procure copies of *Sanskrit Buddhist* literary works from Nepal including *Nava-Dharma*. He supposes that these works were composed by the sages of Magadha, Kosala and Rājgriha (Metropolis of Indian *Buddhism*) whence they were transferred to Nepal by Boudha missionaries soon after they had assumed their existing shape. Destruction of Boudha books was complete eventually in India, in the mean while the most valuable works had been saved in Nepal. He does not feel *Sankara*'s role significant in termination of *Buddhists* as assumed by others. He supposes time and growing ignorance have been enemies of *Sanskrit Boudha* literature in Nepal. A concise listing of literary works of Nepalese and *Bhotiya* (*Tibetan*) is also given in the text.

In the *Chapter* with heading '*The Religions of Nepal and Bhot*', Hodgson tried to explain some of *Buddhist* philosophical points. He mentions the universe rules itself, not by god and powers are inherent in matter and these are not imposed by the god. *Samsāra* and *Nirvāṇa* are discussed with the words *Pravritii* and *Nirvritii* respectively. He further explains that the man is capable of enlarging his faculties to infinity (*Nirvritii*) which is not eternal annihilation but is eternal repose. '*Buddhism*' of Nepal is described in unique way with its divisions into different forms which are not to be found these days. *Buddhism* is first divided into four types – *Swabhāvika*, *Aiswarika*, *Karmika* and *Yatnika*. *Swabhāvika* is further sub divided into *simple Swabhāvika* and *Prajñika Swabhāvika*. Based on his description, *simple Swabhāvika* can be regarded as today's *Theravāda* while *Prajñika Swabhāvika* as *Mahāyāna* stressing upon knowing *sunyatā*. *Aiswarika*, followers of *Ādi-Buddha* can be likened to *Vajrayāna*. Indigenous *Buddhist* texts of Nepal like *Svayambhū Purāṇa* and *Gunakāranda Vyuha* are regarded by Hodgson, the theistic *Buddhist* texts of the philosophy of *Aiswarika*. *Karmika* highlights the role of *Karma* and so has affinity to all the *Buddhist* sects while *Yatnika*, staunch followers of skillful means find closeness to both *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. Earlier approaches like *Swabhāvika* and *Aiswarika* lack providence and dominion. *Karmika* and *Yatnika* are confined to phenomena of Human nature, its free will, its sense of right and wrong and its mental power. His informer, *Amritananda* whom he mentioned as old *Boudha* friend seems to be highly learned *Buddhist* scholar

who had good knowledge of various branches of *Buddhism*. His mentioning that *Buddha* as the mind, *Dharma* as the matter and *San̄gha* as concretion of mind and matter also does not match today's version. He also mentions about *mortal Buddha's* like *Śākyamuni*, *Dīpaṅkar* etc and *Celestial Buddhas* like *Pañca-Buddhas* (*Vairocan*, *Akṣobhya*, *Ratnasambhava*, *Amitābha*, and *Amoghasiddhi*). Linking each of *Pañca-Buddha* with a *jnāna* (knowledge), *Amitābha Buddha* is linked to *Samatā jnāna* (knowledge of equality) and *Ratnasambhava* to *Pratyavekṣana jnāna* (Knowledge of discrimination). This is opposite of what is believed today i.e. *Ratnasambhava* is to be linked to *Samatā jnāna* and *Amitābha* to *Pratyavekṣana jnāna*.<sup>30</sup> According to the author, *Dhyāni Buddhas* seem to be more personification according to a theistic theory, of the active and intellectual powers of nature and hence are called *Pañca-Bhuta*, *Pañca-Indria* and *Pañca-Āyatana-Ākara*. He remarks *Pañca-Buddha* with *Śaktis* (female partner) are peculiar to Nepal. *Vairocan* is associated with *Vajra-Dhāteśwarī*, *Akṣobhya* with *Locanī*, *Ratnasambhava* with *Māmakī*, and *Amitābha* with *Pāṇdurā* and *Amoghsiddhi* with *Tārā* respectively. The author expresses that there is indeed a secret and filthy system of *Buddhas* and *Buddhaśaktis*, in which the ladies act a conspicuous part, and according to which *Ādi-Buddha* is styled *Yogamvara* and *Ādi-Dharma*, *Jnāneśwarī*. Similarly, instead of *Saptatathāgata* (seven mortal *Buddhas* which are popular in Nepal) nine mortal *Buddhas* are mentioned, two additions were *Dīpaṅkar* and *Ratnagarbha*. It is remarkable that *Dīpaṅkar* along with *Saptatathāgata* (*Vipaswī*, *Śikhi*, *Viśwabhu*, *Kanakmuni*, *Krakuccanda*, *Kāsyapa* and *Śākyamuni*) are also mentioned as mortal *Buddhas* among 28 *Buddhas* who have already arisen in the world, but *Ratnagarbha's* mention is unique of Hodgson. Hodgson wonders why only seven mortal *Buddhas* (*Saptatathāgata*) have been selected for special honour in Nepal. But it can be assumed here that they bear special importance as they were known to have visited Nepal and displayed some of their activities as mentioned in *Svayambhū Purāṇa*. *Pañca Buddhas* are adequately described. Likewise, *caitya* culture along with its importance is also highlighted.

Nepalese *Buddhist* followers are divided into two groups- (1) regular and (2) secular which have been treated equivalent to the *Vairāgi* or *Sunyāsi Āśrama* and the *Grihastha Āśrama* of the *Hindu*. The regulars are all monastic as solitarians or

<sup>30</sup> Naresh Man Bajracharya, *Pañca Buddha*, (Kathmandu: Tulratna Bajracharya & Padmakeshari Bajracharya, 2003 AD)

as cenobites living in monasteries (*Vihāra*). Their collective name is *Bandya* (persons entitled to reverence); and they are again divided into four orders called *Bhikṣu* or mendicants, *Śrāvaka* or readers, *Cailaka* or the scantily robed and *Arahants* or adepts. They are monks and constitute the congregation of the faithful or only real *Buddhists*; the seculars having always been regarded as little better than heretics; they are allowed to follow various business of the world, their instructions being provided by the monks. Some of the monks thus became invested with a partially clerical character which they exercised under the names of *Ācārya* and *Vajrācārya* or teacher and powerful teachers. The monasteries or conventional dwellings of the regular *Buddhists* are called *Vihāra* in *Saṅskrit*, *Bahi* and *Bahāl* in *Newārī*. A short description of *Vihāra* is also given. Nepalese have long since abandoned the monastic institutes of their creed, and hence these monasteries are now secularized, but still exclusively appropriated to the *Bandya* or tonsured *Buddhists*.

In the *Chapter* entitled ‘*Sketches of Buddhism- from Bouddha Writings of Nepal*’ also Hodgson clearly mentions Nepal as Boudha country having many large literary works relating to *Buddhism*. Enlistment of names of *Buddhas* as mentioned in the texts- *Lalitvistara*, *Kriyā Saṁgraha* and *Rakṣā Bhagawati* is given. A list of Nepalese *Saṅskrit Buddhist* texts is also provided. The author seemed perplexed to find two kinds of *Buddhist* dogma (1) Exoteric and (2) Esoteric.

Mentioning *Bodhanātmaka iti Buddha; Dhāranātmaka iti Dharma; Samudāyitmakā iti Saṅgha*, Hodgson defines *Saṅgha*, the third member of the Triad (Triple gems) as the multitudinous essence; because multitude is held to be as strong a characteristic or *Pravritii* or palpable world; as unity is of the world of *Nirvriti* or abstraction. The *Saṅgha* is considered to belong not to the exalted state of *Nirvriti* in which no sect of *Buddhism* admits more than two principles of all things or mind and matter, *Buddha* and *Dharma*. He once again mentions the genuine monasticism of *Buddhism* has long since passed away in Nepaul. Disuse of monastic institutes, an exclusive minister of the altar, denominated *Vajrācārya*, has derived his name, office, and existence in Nepal, not only without sanction from the *Baudha* scriptures, but in direct opposition to their spirit and tendency. *Vajrācārya* is termed as the modern fifth order of *Bandhya* which have been made coequal with the four ancient orders (*Śrāvaka*, *Bhikṣu*, *Cailaka*, and *Arhat*). But, as he remarks, there is no old authority except sundry local books which been composed here by

*Vajrācāryas* in their support. In question-answer pattern, the author has presented Nepalese *Buddhist* view about the *Buddha*, *Avatāra*, matter and spirit along with views on creation of the world, origin of mankind, synonyms of the *Buddha* and renowned *Bodhisattvas*.

According to Hodgson, *Lāmās* of Bhot are more orthodox *Buddhamārgi* than *Newārs* and their practice more pure than that of latter. He draws such conclusion considering the visit of Śāṅkarācārya to Nepal and Bhot. In Nepal, Śāṅkarācārya's visit is regarded successful as he succeeded in defeating *Newār Buddhists* in debate, destroyed many *Buddhist* shrines and consolidated brahmanistic faith belittling *Buddhism*. But the case is opposite in Bhot. Śāṅkarācārya's visit to Tibet is treated locally not only a failure as he was defeated wisely by a *Lāmā* but was also killed in course of competition with the *Lāmā*. Therefore, Tibetan's spirit regarding *Buddhism* is kept higher than those of *Newārs*.

In the *Chapter* with sub-heading 'Texts/sacred Writings of Nepal and their authors', *Newārs* are defined as the natives of the valley of Nepal. The Author also defines the word *Bandyā* as the name given to *Buddhamārgi* because his followers make *bandanā* (salutation) and reverence to him and proficient in *Bodhijnāna*. *Banrā* also means *Bandyā*. He mentions according to *Purāṇa*<sup>31</sup> whoever has adopted the tenets of *Buddha*, and has cut off the lock from the crown of his head, of whatever tribe or nation he be, becomes thereby a *Bandyā*. Here, the author divided *Bandyas* into two classes- those who follow the *Vāhya-caryā* and those who adopt the *Abhyantara-caryā*- the words equivalent to the *Grihastha āśrama* and *Vairāgi āshram* of Brahmins. The first class is denominated *Bhikṣu* and the second, *Vajrācārya*. The *Bhikṣu* can not marry where as the *Vajrācārya* is a family man. The *Vajrācārya* is he who has a wife and children and devotes himself to the active ministry of *Buddhism*. No one follows the rules of the class to which he nominally belongs. The *Tantras* and *Dharmas* which ought to be read for their own salvation, they read only for the increase of their stipend and from a greedy desire of money. Thus, *Bandyās* are now divided, according to scriptures into five classes- *Arhat*, *Bhikṣu*, *Śrāvaka*, *Cailaka* and *Vajrācārya*. Now, all the Nepalese *Buddhamārgis* are married men, who pursue the business of the world, and seldom think of the injunctions of their religion. *Vihāra* and *Mahāvihāra* are also

---

<sup>31</sup> *Purāṇa* is a narrative or historical work containing description of the rites and ceremonies of *Buddhism*, and the lives of chief *Tathāgatas*.

differently defined as the temples dedicated to eminent saint and ordinary mortal respectively. Likewise, temples of *Dhyānī Buddhas* or *Ādi Buddha* are denominated as the *Caitya*. While speaking about *Manjuṣrī*, he not only mentions him as *viśwa-karmā* of the *Buddha*, author of the sixty four *vidyās*, greatest architect, who constructs the mansions of the world but also as an important historical person and the apparent introducer of *Buddhism* in Nepal. *Manjuṣrī* brought a colony from China and established Dharmākar as the first king of Nepal. Hodgson supposes Nepal also must have received some colonists from India.

The *Buddha* is the adept in the wisdom of *Buddhism* (*Bodhijnāna*) whose first duty, so long as he remains on earth, is to communicate his wisdom to those who are willing to receive it. These willing learners are the *Bodhisattva*, so called from their hearts being inclined to the wisdom of *Buddhas*, and *Saṅgha* from their companionship with one another, and with their *Buddha* or teacher or coenobitical establishment. He noticed that from the gradual decay of literature and of knowledge of *Saṅskrit* among the *Newārs* has reduced the literary work to common practice of translating ritual works into vernacular tongue and also the usage of adding to the original *Saṅskrit* of such work comments in the vulgar language. *Saṅskrit* has been always considered by Nepalese *Buddhists* the language of literature and they have neglected to cultivate their vernacular tongue.

Regarding the *Buddhist* castes in Nepal, Hodgson mentions that all proper *Boudhas* are *Bandyās* and all *Bandyās* are equal as brethren in the faith. They are properly all ascetics or monks. Their convents are called *Vihāras*. The rule of these *Vihāras* is a rule of freedom, and the door of every *Vihāra* is always open both to the entrance of new comers and to the departure of such of their old inmates as are tuned of their vows. Each *Vihāra* has a titular superior called *nāyaka* whose authority over his brethren depends only on their voluntary deference to his superior learning or piety. Women are held equally worthy of admission with men, and each sex has its *Vihāras*.

Hodgson writes - Nepal is still covered with *Vihāra*, but these ample comfortable abodes have long resounded with the hum of industry and the pleasant voices of women and children. The superior ministry of religion is now solely in the hands of the *Bandyās*, entitled *Vajrācārya*. But, these are termed by Hodgson inferior ministry; as such *Bhikṣus* follow religion as a lucrative and learned profession. All

these professions of the *Vajrācāryas* and of the *Bhikṣus* have become by usage hereditary, as have all other avocations and pursuits, whether civil or religious, in Nepal. Hodgson does not hesitate in calling *Buddhism* of Nepal, the modern corrupt form as there are exclusive ministers of religion or priests. He also seemed perplexed to note many *Baudhas* who retain the lock on the crown of the head, and are not *Bandyās*. These improper *Baudhas* are called *Udās*, *jyāpu*, *kāmi* etc according to their various avocations and crafts. This comprises the untensured class of *Baudhas* while *Vajrācārya* and *Bandyās* comprise tensured class.

In earlier *Chapter Vihāra* is described as temple but in the following *Chapter* later, it is said that the *Vihāra* can never be construed temple but it is a convent or monastery or religious house.

In the *Chapter* with heading ‘*Quotations from Original Saṅskrit authorities*’, he explains the relation of Nepalese *Buddhist* texts with *Saṅskrit*. He discloses that Boudha books were still extant in Nepal in the classical language of India i.e. *Saṅskrit* originals. From such works, which though now found only in Nepal, were composed in the plains of India before the dispersion of the sects. Nepalese *Buddhists* do not hesitate in pointing to India as the cradle of their faith. They make no serious pretensions to a vey high antiquity and never hint at an extra Indian origin.

Citing the speculation of a writer, Sir W. Jone’s day (Mr. Joinville), Hodgson indicates that *Buddhism* is older than *Brāhmanism*. Joinville accepted antiquity of *Buddhism* than *Brāhmanism* because of the grossness of its leading tenets which savours so much of flat ‘Atheism’. *Buddhism* is monastic asceticism in morals, philosophical skepticism in religion and whilst ecclesiastical history all over the world affords abundant instances of such a state of things resulting from gross abuse of the religious sanction. Primitive *Buddhism* was entirely monastic and of an unboundedly enthusiastically genius. Also texts showed that the only true followers of *Buddha* are monks; the majority being cenobites, the rest solitaries. But, the true church (clergy), the congregation of the faithful i.e. *Saṅgha* is constantly said to consist of such only. Hodgson repeats stating that the first mention of an exclusive, professional, active, minister of religion or priest, in the *Baudha* books, is in those of a comparatively recent date, and not of scriptural authority.

*Saṅgha* is congregation of the faithful or church and never into clergy or priesthood. According to Hodgson, *Vajrācārya* can be less accepted as true *Buddhist* compared to *Arahats*, monks. *Vajrācārya* is deviation from the primitive genius and the type of the system which resulted necessarily from its popular diffusion as the rule of life and practice of whole nation. The four *Buddhist* sects the *Swabhāvika*, the *Aiśwarika*, the *Karmika* and the *Yatnika* are described under separate title heading.

He also describes *Ādi-Buddha* mentioning his revelation first in the form of light or flame and as the cause of all existence. Also described is *Ādi-Prajñā* or *Dharma* (also *Prajñāpāramitā*) as the wisdom of *Ādi-Buddha*. The author also tries to describe *Ādi-Saṅgha* as the lord of all worlds, who came as the result of Union of *Upāya* (*Ādi-Buddha*) and *Prajñā* (*Ādi-Dharma*). Enumeration of the principal attributes of *Ādi-Buddha* and 18 *sunyatā*, 32 *lakṣana* and 80 *vyājanā*, 5 *varaṇa*, 10 *bhūvana*, 10 *jñāna*, 10 *akāra*, 10 *artha*, 10 *bala*, 10 *vasita*, 5 *kāya*, 5 *cakṣu* are given in appendices along with other enlistments.

In the *Chapter* with heading ‘*European Speculations on Buddhism*’, Hodgson mainly compares his writings about *Buddhism* with that of Remusat. The first argument between two is about the incarnation. According to Hodgson, *Tathāgatas* once passed into *Nirvṛtī*, can not be reincarnated as the infinite of the *Buddhists* once achieved is never incarnated nor the finites of the *Brāhmanas* be incarnated while Remusat seems relaxed at the point of view of the incarnation. Therefore, Hodgson considers *Avatāra* as an essential and consistent part of *Brāhmanism* and an unessential and inconsistent part of *Buddhism*. As far as Remusat’s view goes, *Vajrācārya* is to be treated laics (laymen) and is far from being true. But they along constituted the clergy in Nepal. The *Bhikṣus* can indeed perform some of the lower offices of religion; but the *Vajrācārya* solely are competent to the discharge of the higher; and, in point of fact, are the only real clergy, that the distinction of *clerus et laicus* (clergies from laymen) in this creed is altogether an anomaly, resulting from the decay of the primitive asceticism of the sect.

Hodgson opines that *Buddhism* arose in an age and country celebrated for literature; and the consequence was that its doctrine and discipline were fixed by means of one of the most perfect language in the world i.e. *Sanskrit*, during or



immediately after the age of its founder. At least *Buddhists* followed primitive scripture of their faith, either in the original language or in careful translations. However, Hodgson is convinced that comparison of *Nepalese Buddhism* with Tibetan, Ceylonese and ancient India on the ground of art, sculpture (of Gayā, Ajantā) gave as much identity of character in all times and places as any other, we know of equal antiquity and diffusion.

Theory of evolution according to *Buddhism* is likened to that of *Pradhān* of Kapila *Sāṅkhya*. Only difference is in *Buddhism* the source is *Prajñā* and in *Sāṅkhya* *Pradhān*. His view is also compared with that of Remusat. The word ‘*Ādi-Buddha*’ is first made familiar to the westerners by Hodgson.

In the *Chapter* with the title ‘*Note on the inscription from Sārnāth*’, Hodgson expresses wonder in having every *Newār* acquainted with the famous *Buddhist* stanza which was also inscribed on the inscription of Sārnāth. The stanza reads ‘*Ye Dharmā hetu prabhavā; hetus teṣām Tathātgato Hyuvadata, Teṣām ca yo nirodha, evaṃ vādi Mahā Śramaṇa*’. The stanza is very popular in *Nepalese Buddhism* and is recited now and then in most of the *Buddhist* rituals.

In the *Chapters* entitled ‘*Notice of Ādi-Buddha and of the seven Mortal Buddhas*’, and ‘*Account of Dharmakar Rājā and Dharmapāl Rājā*’ a short history of Nepal on the early settlement of *Buddhist* kingdom is given. The description is based upon information provided in the *Svayambhū Purāṇa*.

In the *Chapter* with title ‘*Note on the Primary Language of the Buddhist writings*’ *Buddhists* are considered as practical reformers whose philosophical dogmata forming the basis of the popular creed were enounced, defended and systematized in *Saṅskrit*. In the opinion of Hodgson, the extent and character of the works done in *Saṅskrit* settled the question that the philosophical founders of *Buddhism* used *Saṅskrit* only, to expound, defend and records the speculative principles of their systems. And, the practical system of belief, deduced from those principles, was spread among the people of the spot, as well as propagated to remoter spots, by means of the vernacular. In the context that many believe *Buddha*’s teaching in writing spread from Srilanka, it is admitted that *Buddhism* was long taught in Ceylon without the aid of the books and that the first book reached that island nearly 300 years after the introduction of the creed. And, it can be assumed that the

*Buddhist* books that reached there were mainly vernacular other than *Saṅskrit*. Hodgson speculates from the general character of the *Buddhism* in Srilanka that there was protracted total want, and ultimate imperfect supply of those standard written authorities of the sect which regulated belief and practice in Magadha, in Kosala and Rājagriha. But, from this *Buddhist* metropolis (Magadha, Kosala and Rājagriha) the authorities in question were transferred directly and immediately to the proximate hills of Nepal where only, they are now to be found. This speculation of Hodgson is veritable from the books found in Ceylon, which if not translations were mostly ritual collections, legendary hearsays, loose comments on received texts and historical annals detailing the spread and diffusion of *Buddhism*. *Buddhists* of Ceylon drew their faith from secondary, not primary source and that whilst the former were in Ceylon as elsewhere, vernacular; the latter were in Magadha, Kosala and Rājgriha as they are still in Nepal, classical or *Saṅskrit*. Hodgson also points out another probability that in the seventh century and afterwards, the ancient Buddhistic religion was remodeled and generally written in *Saṅskrit*, before the Tibetans commenced its introduction by translations into their own country.

In the *Chapter* entitled ‘*A Disputation respecting caste by a Buddhist*’ Hodgson elaborated the sound scholarship of a *Buddhist* displayed in repudiating the caste *Brāhmin*. In the following *Chapter* with heading ‘*On the extreme resemblance that prevails between many of the symbols of Buddhism and Saivism*’ Hodgson painstakingly describes how *Buddhist* statues and symbols were converted to *Hinduist* at a famous shrine *Mahā Baudha* temple in Bodhgayā in India. There, *Saptatathātata* were improperly regarded as *Pañcapāndava*, *Maitreya* as goddess *Saraswati* and so forth. Even main statue of *Śākyamuni Buddha* was considered as *Mahā muni* and the great *Mahā Buddha* temple as *Jagatnāth* temple. This gives the picture how *Mahābodhi* temple of Bodhgayā was mistakenly interpreted according to *Hinduism*.

The last *Chapter* of the first part – ‘*The Pravajyā Vrata or Initiatory Rites of the Buddhists according to the Pūjā Kanda*’ has procedure of becoming a *Bandyā* (monastic or proper *Buddhist*). If any one desires to become a *Bandyā*, how he should approach to the *Guru*, request to give him *Pravajyā vrata* and the steps taken in so doing are elaborated in the *Chapter*. It is remarkable that first the aspirant is introduced into *Śrāvaka caryā* by conferring him *Pravajyā vrata*

(Ordination) which he complies fully for four days, later he is introduced into *Mahāyānacaryā* after he makes request for abandonment of uneasy ascetic life but still sticking to observance of certain *Buddhist* commandments- not to destroy life, not to steal, not to commit adultery, not to speak evilly, not to take spirituous liquors and drugs and to be element to all living beings. It is also notable to know use of *Pañcarakṣā* text as one of the ritual tool in the process of Nepalese ordination.

What had been understood by Hodgson from his book about *Buddhism* is revealed from his own saying which goes as follows- “*Buddhism* is not simple, but a vast and complicated structure erected during ages of leisure, by a literary people. And, *Buddhism* of one age is different from that of another.... To know Evolution of innumerable deities of the existent *Buddhist* pantheon, future research is needed...” Considering *Buddhism* as a sad jumble of cloudy metaphysics, Brian Hodgson places all his discovered materials for more accurate investigation by those who have leisure, patience and aknowledge for the undertaking and who, with competent talents, will be kind enough to afford the world the benefit of so irksome an exercise of them.

## 2.2 John K. Locke. *Karuṇāmaya, The Cult of Avlokiteswara-Matsyendranāthain the Valley of Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan for CNAS, 1980)

Father John K. Locke (1933- 2009) is a familiar name in among Nepalese *Buddhists* and other international *Buddhist* scholars. His presence is felt through his writings on *Nepalese Buddhism*. He was an established authority on *Newār Buddhism* or the *Buddhism* of Kathmandu Valley.

Father Locke was involved in *Buddhism* of *Nepal-maṇḍala* (Kathmandu Valley) since 1960. How an American Jesuit priest associated with St Xavier’s organization became an authority on *Newār Buddhism* is a matter of curiosity. He had so far written three books– *Rāto Matsyendranātha* of Patan and Bungamati in 1973, *Buddhist Monasteries of Nepal* in 1973 and *Karuṇāmaya* in 1980. Besides, he published many articles on *Buddhism* of Nepal in various local and international periodicals.

In the preface of the book, *Karuṇāmaya, The Cult of Avlokiteswara-Matsyendranāthain the Valley of Nepal*, John K. Locke mentions that formal research of *Newār Buddhism* was begun by Brian H. Hodgson. His view in this regard is similar to the view expressed by Mr. Rajendra Ram in his book '*History of Buddhism in Nepal*'. He further mentions that excellent *Chapter on Nepalese Buddhism* is included in David Snellgrove's book – *Buddhist Himalaya*; that most of the foreign writers who penned on *Buddhism* of Nepal, wrote from anthropological standpoint; that *Newār Buddhism* is a complex confused mixture of *Hinduism* and *Buddhism* and is peculiar to the valley of Nepal and that due to esoteric nature of *Newār Buddhism* and lack of knowledgeable persons there is difficulty in finding true reliable informants of *Newār Buddhism*.

Introduction *Chapter* begins with the description of Nepal, its geographical location and inhabitants. Nepal valley is described as the receptacle of flow of refugees from North and south and whoever came to Valley, became *Newār* and got integrated into *Newār Society*. According to him the term *Newār* is not an ethnic term but a cultural term, denoting the very rich and complex culture of the society of the valley. He defines *Newār* as an inhabitant of the valley of Nepal. The author also has given a short political history in this Introduction *Chapter*. The author tries to justify the reason of choosing the subject '*The cult and history of Avlokiteśwara-Matsyendranātha*' because this cult still flourishes and provides one of the best examples of interaction between *Hinduism* and *Buddhism*.

The book *Karuṇāmaya* is divided into four parts. Part one entitled 'The Setting: *Newār Buddhism*, its Structure and Principal Rituals' explores the social and religious structure of *Newār Buddhism*, the priests, their customs, traditions and their rituals. He suggests that as *Newār Buddhism* is primarily *Ritual Buddhism*, any understanding of the living tradition must be based on an understanding of their rituals, not on an understanding of philosophical texts or *sūtras* which they worship but do not read. But the point which he noted here, is that those rituals were developed on the basis of philosophy and icons and deities worshipped were the personified icons of the texts or philosophies. Part two '*The Current Cult of Avlokiteśwara-Matsyendranātha: Jana Bāhā Dya:*' concerns investigation of the cult and specific ritual surrounding the worship of *Avlokiteśwara-Matsyendranātha*. Part three '*The history and development of the cult of Bung-dya:*

and the related *Lokeśwara*’ deals mainly in historical approach of the subject concerned. And the last *Chapter* Four ‘*Avlokiteśwara* and *Matsyendranātha*’ explores the relationship between *Avlokiteśwara* and *Matsyendranātha* first in the broader context of the cult of *Bodhisattva-Avlokiteśwara* in *Mahāyāna Buddhism* and the cult of the *Yogi Matsyendranātha* of Śaivites and then in the context of what is known of the interaction of these two religious streams within the valley of Nepal. The present review is mainly focused upon first part of the book as its contents are relevant to the subject of thesis.

In the section entitled ‘*Bare and Bāhā*’ of the *Chapter* one John K. Locke prefers to call *Bāhā* a shrine than a monastery where priests (*Vajrācāryas*) reside and tend the deities. These shrines along with priests make up the background for *Newār Buddhism*. He claimed *Newār Buddhism* a strange mixture of *Hinduism* and *Buddhism* and the cult of *Avlokiteśwara-Matsyendranātha* has been cited as a case in point. If definition of the *Bāhā* is to be given as assumed by Locke, then how can the status of another group- *Śākya* who equally reside in *Bāhā* be defined; should they also be called priests, Locke did not take pain in dealing this issue. Both *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* are described as the castes under *Bare*. As does Locke, even educated *Vajrācārya* hold the view that *Buddhist Saṅgha* should be kept open for all irrespective of the castes. In this section of the *Chapter*, he tried to explore answers to such questions as “Is *Newār Buddhism* a religious tradition authentically adapted to the temperament and culture of the people of the valley?; Who are *Buddhist* priests,; and what is their relationship to the traditional *Buddhist* monk, the *Bhikṣu*. He concedes that previous writers who have been mostly anthropologists have examined the *Bare* from the viewpoint of the caste structure of *Newār* society, treating it parallel to nearly the *Brāhmans*. From the viewpoint of caste this is quite valid. He mentions that among the two groups of *Bare*, the *Vajrācārya* (or *Gubhāju*) and the *Śākya* (simply *Bare* or *Bāndā*), the former is considered higher by virtue of their priestly functions. Although *Śākyas* are identified as goldsmith and *Vajrācārya* as family priest, Locke finds that their traditional occupation has nothing to do with caste. He quotes the mention of Haimendorf that “a *Newār* caste is a commensally and normally endogamous group, made up of several exogamous clans or residential units”. He notes that the distinction between *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* is not caste. He wonders from the viewpoint of *Buddhism* that the position of all of the *Bare* as a caste is an anomaly. He bickers that the initiation rite which they still undergo includes the complete

shaving of the head as a sign of the rejection of all caste status and entrance into the *Saṅgha*, or monastic community of which they are the direct successors indicate these were not castes. In his view, it is an anomaly that they are given a special caste status which is so recognized by others. It is also an anomaly that they have formed a closed matrilineal descent group, for in all *Buddhist* countries, and in India during the heyday of *Buddhism*, the monastic community was always open to members of all castes. He also recalls the saying of many *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākya*s that this caste status is something “imposed” on them by the *Malla* kings, especially Jayasthitimalla, who organized all *Newār* society along the lines of *Hindu* castes. As Locke notes, they freely admit that there is no justification for such a status or such a closed *Saṅgha* in the *Buddhist* scriptures and that their *Saṅghas* should be open to all who want to take the initiation of a *Śākya* or *Vajrācārya*.

He philosophically agrees that *Bare* should be kept outside of the caste system. He notes that the caste structure of *Newār* society in fact places the *Bare* and especially the *Vajrācārya*, in a contradictory position. He suggests in order to understand their position in *Newār Buddhist* society it would perhaps be better to start not from the considerations of caste, but from their religious status.

He defines *Bare* as one who has undergone the *Bare chuyegu* initiation (ordination) rite and consequently has become a member of a recognized *Buddhist Saṅgha*. Trying to trace origin of *Bare*, he envisages that though the communities of *Bhikṣus* forming an institution called *Saṅgha* were nearly always made up of celibate monks and always open to qualified candidates of any caste or race, at some stage in the development of *Newār Buddhism*, for some reasons not yet clear by any means, this institution underwent two very significant changes. First, the members of the *Saṅgha* become married men with families; and secondly, the *Saṅgha* became a closed matrilineal descent group. He further mentions that each monastery, instead of being open to any qualified candidate, was now closed to all except the descendants of the members of the *Saṅgha* of that monastery. He marks that only the son of a member of the *Saṅgha* could be initiated and then gets only into the *Saṅgha* of which his father was a member. He mentions that the monasteries to which these *Saṅgha* are attached are still known by the *Sanskrit* name of *Vihāra* or *Mahāvihāra*, and in *Newārī* are called either *Bāhā* or *Bahī*. Description of monastery is given and it is noted that the upper storey is used as

living quarters by the families attached to the *Saṅgha* members. Locke notes losing of distinctive architectural form in the monasteries of the valley. He also mentions about losing trend that originally all the members of a *Bāhā Saṅgha* lived within the monastery compound. Categorization of present extant monasteries is shown as *Mū Bāhā*, *Bāhā*, *Kachā Bāhā* and *Bahi*. He mentions that consecration of new *Bāhā* is both expensive and long, lasting over a period of one and half year. He notes that members of a given *Saṅgha* are often widely scattered resulting in the breakdown of the closely knit *Bāhā* community.

In the section subtitled ‘*Śākya and Vajrācārya*’ renounced castes are treated. Total percentage of *Bare* including both *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* is mentioned as 10% of the *Newār* population with the greatest concentration in Patan. Locke mentions that by having an additional initiation rite known as *Ācā luyagu* (“making of the *Ācārya*”) given only to *Vajrācārya* (but not to *Śākyas*) they received the power to act as priests and to perform the *homa* sacrifice and confer initiation to others. Since the *homa* sacrifice is an integral part of the principal religious ceremonies and life cycle rites, the *Vajrācāryas* have a monopoly on the performance of these essential rites. However, he puts forth the view that life of the *Saṅgha* and monastery do not solely depend on *Vajrācārya* because some *Saṅgha* are made up entirely of *Vajrācārya*, some entirely of *Śākyas*, and some are mixed. He describes the *Saṅgha* as one unified community and all members are equal as far as life and functioning of the *Saṅgha* of the monastery is concerned. He elucidates that the *Vajrācārya*’s function as a priest is something separate from his membership in the *Saṅgha* of a *Bāhā*. *Śākyas* are divided into four categories- *Śākyavamaṁsa* or *Śākyabhikṣu* (initiated in principal *Bāhā*), *Sakhā Śākya* (initiated in branch *Bāhā*), *Brahmacarya Śākya* (initiated in *Bahi*) and *Cailaka Śākya* (initiated before a *caitya*). Some *Cailaka Śākyas* are called *Baudhācārya* who are initiated in front of *Svayambhū caitya*. He mentions that *Baudhācārya Śākyas* are also given *Ācāryabhiṣeka* empowering them to act as priests within his families. He reveals that they are not permitted to act as priest outside. He understands that all the principal *Bāhā* have *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members and so they are called principal *Bāhā*.

In the section subtitled as ‘*The Ācārya Guṭhī of Kathmandu*’ Locke mentions how *Ācārya Guṭhī* was formed. All the *Saṅghas* of the eighteen principal *Bāhās* of Kathmandu have *Vajrācārya* members and most of them have *Saṅghas* composed

exclusively of *Vajrācāryas*. All of the *Vajrācārya* of Kathmandu belong to an overall *Vajrācārya* association known as the *Ācārya Guṭhī* whose principal shrine is the cave like *āgaṃ* below the main stupa at *Svayambhū nātha* known as Śāntipur. Locke elaborates on how *Ācāryaguṭhī* meeting is held annually and how it used to function. Locke notes that at present the annual meeting is not much more than a social event, a common *pūjā* and a feast. He further mentions that the *Ācāryaguṭhī* was also responsible for standardizing ritual and providing ritual texts for its members.

Regarding *Saṅghas* of Patan, Locke mentions that there is no association like *Ācārya guṭhī* of Kathmandu to keep the uniformity of the ritual performance. However, Locke discloses that the priestly activity of the Patan *Vajrācārya* is regulated by a set of rules of conduct supposed to have been drawn up by one *Tathāgatavajra* of *Kwā Bāhā* who made arrangements for ritual texts and the teaching of ritual to *Vajrācārya* in Patan. Referring to the saying of his informants, Locke reveals that *Vajrācārya* of Patan and Bhaktapur were once connected to the *āgaṃ* of Śāntipur but broke away when the three cities became separate kingdoms. It is also mentioned that however, some people of Patan ascribed the present arrangement in Patan to the king Siddhinarasinhmalla (1619-1661 AD) who called together the leaders of fifteen major *Bāhās* of Patan and made rules for their guidance to organize the religious life of the *Buddhists*. Locke notes that the position of the *Vajrācāryas* in Patan was never as strong as that of their confreres in Kathmandu for several reasons. In Patan, *Śākyas* are regarded arrogant taking pride in not having *Vajrācārya* in their *Saṅgha* in some *Saṅgha* and he has given example of *Śākyas* of *Naka Bahi* who take pride in keeping their *Saṅgha* independent from the *Vajrācārya*. An interesting case is mentioned on how *Yampi Vihāra* came under influence of *Vajrācārya* of *Dhum Bāhā* due to order of the King Siddhinarasinghamalla.

Considering the *Bāhās* of Bhaktapur, it is mentioned that Bhaktapur is told less *Buddhist* and much more a *Hindu* city than Patan or Kathmandu, and this is borne by the state of the *Bāhās* and their *Saṅghas* having only eight to twelve extant *Bāhās*. Nearly all of the *Bāhās* are in a semi-ruined state due to several responsible factors. The *Bare* community also seems to lack the organization and structure found in Kathmandu and Patan. Locke points out that there are no *Bāhās* considered to be the principal or official ones as in Patan and Kathmandu and also



there is no overall organization of *Vajrācārya* such as *Ācāryaguṭhī* of Kathmandu. Each *Bāhā* has its own *guṭhī*, and in the *Bāhās* where there are *Vajrācārya*, they have an *Ācāryaguṭhī* as in Patan. The only *Buddhist* institution which has a city-wide importance is the worship of the Bhaktapur *Kumārī*, who is always a *Śākya* from *Ādibuddha Vihāra*. He mentions that most of the *Bāhās* are in a rather sad state of disrepair and consist of nothing more than the shrine of the *Kwāpā dyo*. He notes *Lumbivavarana Mahāvihāra* to have now turned a *Hindu* shrine of Bhimsen tended by *Ācāryu* priests. Also noted is *Muni Bāhā*, which was originally founded in 787 N.S. by a Tibetan monk and one Padma Dhoj of Bhaktapur, which has recently been completely rebuilt, and a small community of *Bhikṣus* have taken up residence there. However, the *Śākyas* attached to the *Bāhā* still perform the daily *pūjā* at the new shrine and have initiations there. A list of major *Bāhās* and *Bahis* of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur are also presented.

In the section with title ‘Initiation of the *Bare*’, he once again mentions that membership in the *Sanḡha* of a *Bāhā* or a *Bahi* is open to the sons of the members of the *Sanḡha*; actual membership, however, is conferred only at the time the boy is initiated. Locke points out the rule that the initiation must take place in the father’s *Bāhā* or *Bahi*. However, he makes a distinction between *Bāhā* initiations (*Bare chyuyegu*) and *Vajrācārya* initiations (*Ācā luyegu*). *Vajrācārya* initiation (*Ācā luyagu*) is carried out in eighteen principal *Bāhās* which are considered the main *Vihāras* for this reason while *Bare chyuyegu* initiations are also performed in the *kaccā Bāhās* and the *Bahis* for the members of those *Sanḡhas*. There is no *Vajrācārya* initiation in either *Bahis* or *Kaccā Bāhās* for the simple reason that there are no *Vajrācārya* attached to their *Sanḡhas*. The author also reveals the case how effort of immigrants of *Kwā Bāhā* who settled in Palpa tried to set up new *Bāhā* in affiliation to *Kwā Bāhā*, at Pālpā to ease initiation of their descendent, went in vain at the refusal of proposal from the elders. But, later they did set up *Bāhā* at the cost of cutting off relation with *Kwā Bāhā*. In conclusion, then, *Bare* initiations are regularly and rightly performed in the eighteen principal *Bāhās* of Kathmandu and Patan, in the *Bahis*, the *Kaccā Bāhās* of Kathmandu and before *caityas* (for *cailaka Śākyas*). Initiation for the *Vajrācāryas* is ordinarily performed only in one of the eighteen principal *Bāhās* of Kathmandu and Patan. In Bhaktapur *Vajrācārya* initiations are performed in all of the *Bāhās* which have *Vajrācārya* members.

The initiation rite of the *Bare*, known as the *Bare chyuyegu* (the making of a *Bare*) is really a capsule recapitulation of their position in the *Newār Buddhist* community and the history of its development. *Pravajyā* is the *Saṅskrit* term used from ancient times for the first rite of initiation given to a layman wishing to become a *Buddhist* monk. A short formal procedure of giving *Pravajyā* is given. After ordination, the boys become *Bhikṣus* and they remain so for four days. They have to observe the regulation of diet of the monk, avoid contact with anything unclean and keep the ten rules of disciple. Locke elucidates, from the viewpoint of the *Vajrācārya* that the initiated passes through successively higher forms of *Buddhism*. Starting as a totally uninitiated boy, he is first initiated as a house holder (*upāsaka*), i.e. a *Buddhist* layman. Then he becomes a *Hinayāna* monk through the *Pravajyā*. With the “laying aside of the robes” he embraces the *Mahāyāna* stage, and, if he is a *Vajrācārya*, he will be further initiated into the mysteries of the *Vajrayāna*.

In the section ‘*Initiation of the Vajrācārya*’ of the *Chapter* the author mentions about the process of making *Vajrācāryas* known as *Ācā luyegu*. After *Pravajyā*, those boys who are sons of *Vajrācārya* are taken back to their *Bāhā* on another day for their final initiation, *ācā luyegu*. It is often done at a later date, sometimes postponed until after marriage, as in Patan. He elaborates that this rite of making an *Ācārya*, also known in *Saṅskrit* as the *pañcābhiṣeka* is performed by the eldest *Vajrācārya* of the boy’s *Bāhā*. The initiation consists of five *tantric* consecrations known as *abhiṣeka*: the *Kalaśābhiṣeka* (water flask consecration), *Mukutābhiṣeka* (crown consecration), *Vajrābhiṣeka* (*vajra* or diamond consecration), *Ghantābhiṣeka* (bell consecration), and *Guhyābhiṣeka* (secret consecration) following these consecrations the candidates are given *mantra* of *Herukacakraśaṁvara*, different from the one they were given before. The *mantra* is always passed from *Guru* to disciple and never divulged or written down even in the ritual texts. Locke mentions that having taken these consecrations the *Vajrācārya* is empowered to perform the *homa* sacrifice and confer initiations later. He is entitled to have *jajamāns*, i.e. clients for whom he acts as priest. *Vajrācārya* can still exert sufficient social pressure to assert their traditional rights. He opines that initiation rite of *Bare* reflects the historical development of the customs of the *Newār Buddhist* community and define the status of the *Bare* in present day *Newār Society*. He indicates that the *Saṅgha* of the *Bāhā* is a direct successor of the *Bhikṣu Saṅgha* of earlier days. The *Vajrācārya* acts as priest for the *Buddhist*

families and for services in the *Bāhās* when this involves the offering of the *homa* sacrifice, the conferring of initiations, and the consecration of images. They are the custodians of these ancient shrines which were, and to a lesser degree still are, the focal points of the religious life of the *Buddhist* community.

Under the heading ‘*Dekhā*’ Locke describes yet another *tantric* initiation, known as in *Newārī Dekhā* or in *Saṅskrit* “*Daśabhiṣeka Dīkṣā Vidhi*” (“the rite of imitation and the ten consecrations”) or simply the *Ācāryadīkṣā* (“initiation of *Ācārya*”), which the *Bare* may take at a later time. The term *dīkṣā* means a spiritual initiation accompanied by the giving of a *mantra*. The *Ācāryadīkṣā* is an initiation into the *maṇḍala* of *Heruka Cakrasaṃvara* and his consort *Vajrabārāhī* along with conferring of ten consecrations (*abhiṣeka*) and seven *mantras*. He notes that the first series of consecrations given are the same as the one given to the *Vajrācārya* in his initiation rite. The *Ācā luyegu* is, in fact, a shortened form of the *Ācārya dīkṣā*. The *dīkṣā* is given at irregular intervals by skilled and learned *Vajrācāryas* who have taken the *dīkṣā* themselves and have a reputation as learned *Gurus*. Locke gives the details that the *Guru* and his wife, who are considered possessed by the spirit of *Herukacakrasaṃvara* and his consort, give the initiation to the candidate and his wife; the culmination of the rite is the identification of the candidate and his wife with the *Guru* and his wife, and consequently with *Herukacakrasaṃvara*. This seems the rite is totally for householder groups having family. He unveils that as with so many of these *Vajrayāna* rites, the philosophy behind all of this and the practice of the *yogā* are lost to the present generation. The whole has been ritualized and is looked upon as an introduction to *Vajrayāna* ritual and the empowerment to perform such rituals. It is known that in former times, a long period of preparation was required to be qualified for getting *dīkṣā*. Mastery of *Saṅskrit* grammar, study of the nine principal *Mahāyāna* texts which the *Vajrācāryas* consider to be their canon and mastery of meditation and yogic practice were all prerequisites. He makes a point that if one received the *dīkṣā* from a *Guru* widely renowned for his learning and *tantric* attainments, he was accorded the respect due to his *Guru*. Custom as to who is qualified to take the *dīkṣā* differs. Locke has mentioned probable castes who can receive *dīkṣā*. Certain *tantric pūjā* can be performed by those *Vajrācārya* only who have taken specific *dīkṣā*.

Locke mentions about very low percentage of the *Bare* actually taking interest in the *dīkṣā*. He finds two reasons for this; first, the way the *dīkṣā* is given now as a

purely ritual exercise without any instruction or study preceding it has little appeal to the young today. They do not understand what the *dīkṣā* is all about, consequently look down on it. Secondly, one who undergoes *dīkṣā* has to take upon himself certain personal obligations, such as the performance of a daily *pūjā* in the agam, and prescribed fast at certain times of the year which most young people today find this a meaningless burden. He however, points out that those who do take the *dīkṣā* are generally very faithful to these obligations. He mentions that though *dīkṣā* also included the *Pañcābhiṣeka* which is given during *Ācāryābhiṣeka*, *dīkṣā* does not qualify the candidate as *Vajrācārya*. *Vajrācārya* title is inherited to sons of the *Vajrācārya* only, after having *Ācāryābhiṣeka*. However, Locke considers that *dīkṣā* can be regarded as the liberal attitude of the *Newār Buddhists* as it is open, if not to all castes, at least to a larger group including lay people *Udāya*. This, then, is the one area where they have managed to salvage something of the universal *Buddhist* principle that the inner core of *Buddhism* is open to all qualified candidates, but the exercise of the rights and powers conferred in the *dīkṣā* is curtailed by the regulation that only the son of a priest may function as a priest. The reason for this restriction being told in this connection is that the *Vajrācārya* are given a *mantra* of *Vajrasattva* not given to those who take the *dīkṣā* and this makes the difference. Locke also notes that it would be impossible for all initiated *Vajrācārya* to make a living by acting full time as priests.

In the section with sub title ‘*Life of the Saṅgha and its Guṭhīs*’ Locke describes the term *Guṭhī* as the one used to denote a social institution that determines the rights and obligations of a *Newār* and his community. He recognizes the *Saṅgha* of a *Bāhā* as such a *guṭhī* whose function is to look after the *Bāhā* and provide for the prescribed worship of the *Kyāpādyo* and *āgaṃ* deities. The rhythm of the life in the *Saṅgha* of a *Bāhā* is governed by a series of *guṭhīs*. According to him, all the initiated members of the *Saṅgha* comprise the *guṭhīyārs* and the rights and duties of each are regulated by the elders. He mentions that each *Bāhā* has some land registered with the government *guṭhī* office, the income from which is used for their services in the shrine and to finance their feast and festivals. Office and duties within the *Saṅgha* are allotted on the principle of seniority of initiation. The head of the *Saṅgha* or *thakāli* is the senior most initiated member of the *Saṅgha*. He mentions of two systems for governing a *Bāhā* (1) the first system is government by the elders, generally ten elders, also known as ten *ādju* though some may have varied number of twelve, twenty. *Bahis* generally have five elders’ committee. (2)

the second system is the government body formed by a committee made up of one member each from the families (*kawal*) attached to the *Bāhā*, as in *Jana Bāhā*. If this system is followed the three eldest members of the *Saṅgha* form a committee that conducts most of the day to day business. In case if the members of the elders can not come to an agreement, the entire *Saṅgha* is summoned and the matter is settled by ballot. He mentions that the religious observance that the governing committee must see to at present are primarily three: providing for the daily service in the shrine of the *Kwāpā dyo*; the monthly worship of the *āgaṃ deities* and the annual gathering of the whole *Saṅgha*. Once a year all of the members of the *Saṅgha* gather for a *pūjā* of the *Kwāpā dyo* and a feast. He mentions that such are the *Bare*, the direct successors of the *Buddhist* monks and the priests of the *Newār Buddhist* community constituting the clergy of the *Newār Buddhism*.

In the section of the *Chapter*, entitled ‘*The Buddhist Newār Laity*’ regarding the identification of the *Buddhist Newār* laity, Locke points out that apart from *Bare* it is extremely difficult to define who are *Buddhists* and who are *Hindus* and for the vast majority of the population it is a meaningless question. Most writers have settled on the criterion of the family priest if the family priest is Brahman, the family is *Hindu*; if he is a *Vajrācārya*, they are *Buddhists*. The criterion is valid enough for the *Hindus* too, accepting that *Newār Brāhmans* and the descendants of the courtiers of the *Malla* (most of the present “*Śreṣṭha*”) are clearly *Hindu*. Locke points out two contradictory examples of *Pradhāns* of Thamel *Bāhā* in Kathmandu and *Tulādhars* tending Naradevi temple. *Pradhāns*, the former, a high class of *Śreṣṭha*, instead of being typical *Hindu* and intermarrying *Hindu* are *Buddhists* having their family priest *Vajrācārya* and the later, *Tulādhars* of Naradevi, being the *Buddhists* traditionally tend *Hindu* temple, Naradevi. However, Locke gives the room for thought that the deity enshrined inside Naradevi temple could be Basundhara, a *Buddhist* deity. Intermingling cases are likely, as Locke points out that the lay devotees (*upāsaka*) patronized the monks, supported them, listened to their teachings and shaped their private lives according to the teachings of the *Buddha*. Yet they were still members of society, as caste-structured *Hindu* society, and had to be initiated, married, etc according to their tradition. In this connection, Locke gives example of king Narendradeva who ruled Nepal in the middle of the seventh century, but was considered a *Buddhist* by the Chinese traveler who met him, yet in his inscriptions he used Śaivite titles and said that he ruled by the favour of Paśupati. He mentions that there are numerous examples in India and

Nepal of kings who were considered to be *Buddhist*, yet did not cut themselves off from *Hindu* society nor from the services of the *Brāhmans*. He reveals that “in the lay world, there was no sharp distinction between the *Buddha*’s regular *upāsaka* and the non *upāsaka*. Anybody can become *upāsaka* simply by taking refuge in the *Buddha*, he does not have to altar his status in the social order. In other words there was no incongruity in one’s becoming an *upāsaka* and at the same time maintaining one’s customary family duties, religious and social, provided they did not offend the obligatory rules, non killing etc. Locke denies the common belief that rises of *tantric Buddhism* imbibed the worship of the *Hindu* gods by the *Buddhists* and the erection of their icons at *Buddhist* shrine. He corroborates this to following *Buddhism* by the *Hindu* people. Several evidences like seals show that Nālandā- the great *Buddhist* monastery of India was also supported by followers of *Brāhmanical* creeds. Sometimes seals with *Brāhmanical* emblems appeared side by side with monastic icons.

Locke describes how *Hindu* gods found their way in the *Buddhist* monastic shrines. He notes that the *Buddha* did not forbid worship of the gods, what he said was that for the attainment of true happiness and enlightenment culminating in *Nirvāṇa*, worship of the gods and sacrifice are useless. The gods whose existence and control over natural forces, the *Buddha* did not deny, are bound by the same law of *kamma-samsāra* of men. But the gods were not worshipped primarily for enlightenment. There was no real contradiction in their minds between the worship of the gods and their adherence to *Buddhism* and their patronage of the monks. Worship of the gods was in the mind of the followers, mostly uneducated. He mentions worship as the only way for them to influence the forces and events which determined the quality of life here and now. He highlights the importance of ceremony and rituals for enhancing appeal for the common people and justifies incorporation of more and more of the common ritual and religious heritage of India by *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* and integrated into *Buddhist* religious practice. He mentions that the process is still going on today among the *Newārs*. In the cities where the great *Bāhās* exist, the laity worships the *Buddhist* gods with a round of ritual conducted by the *Bare* which differs little in outward detail from the rituals performed by the *Hindus*, but which is replete with *Buddhist* symbols and with prayers drawn from *Mahāyānasūtras* and the *Buddhist Tantras*. What is peculiar to *Newār Buddhism* is that the *Buddhist* priests have taken over the role of the *Brāhmans* as family priests who perform the life cycle rites. Locke finds this as a

convincing instance of happening where *Buddhism* flourished in a *Hindu* society. He wonders at that the *Bhikṣus* of India never took up the task. He logically describes how *Buddhism* died out in India being cut off from its source of life once the monasteries were destroyed and the *Saṅgha* vanished. But, he *Saṅgha* still exists though the tradition is deteriorating. Locke puts forth the present situation of *Newār Buddhism* and expresses the sad fact that, due to the decline of scholarship and abandonment of *Buddhist* meditation among the *Vajrācārya* at large, the process is generally arrested at the level of ritual for its own sake. The *Vajrācārya* provide the people with liturgy for their life cycle rites and religious devotions which is *Buddhist* and which should serve as an introduction to a deeper understanding and appreciation of *Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna* doctrine.

Locke also has discussed about possible causes of deteriorating situation of *Newār Buddhism*. Migration of *Bāhā* families is considered one the main cause of gradually deteriorating *Saṅgha* community life. Besides, education, modernization and a growing secularism in Kathmandu Valley have eroded the position of *Vajrācārya*. As its result the new generation questions the meaning and value of the traditional round of ritual. It is precisely at this point that their questions should lead them to a deeper understanding of what *Buddhism* has to offer those who are ready to go beyond ritual, but their questions find no answers. On the other hand, sons of *Vajrācārya* who have received an education take to secular occupations and the professions, and seldom, if ever, act as priests. The young men who take up the work of a priest are sons of the poorer and less educated *Vajrācārya* -men who do not have the education to interpret and adapt their tradition to the needs of their better educated and increasingly secularized *jajamāns*. Locke indirectly indicates that *Newār Buddhism* is being somehow shouldered by *Bare* (*Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*) and is to be in struggle phase for survival. He concludes that it remains to be seen whether this will result in a true renewal or will meet the same fate as *Buddhism* in India.

*Chapter Two* which is entitled as ‘*The principal Rituals of Vajrācārya*’ has the details of principal *Vajrayāna* rituals. Locke must have stressed on the word *Vajrācārya* than *Vajrayāna* as the main performers of such rituals are *Vajrācārya*. Thus, he prefers to call *Vajrayāna* as the *Buddhism* of *Vajrācārya*. On one hand it signifies the uniqueness of *Nepalese Buddhism* while on the other hand, it indicates limitation.

Ritual is paramount in *Vajrayāna Buddhism* and the writer sees nothing unnatural or illogical in so being. Rather he plausibly justifies that ritual is not contradiction to the *Buddhism* but it had been the part and parcel of *Buddhism* from the very beginning. Locke describes the rituals as the integral part of *Buddhism* by mentioning that earlier form of *Buddhism* too has rituals which increased in frequency, propensity and intensity as the as time passed on, first in the various sects of *Sthaviravāda*, then at greater pace with the development of *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. He indicates that ritual was prevalent in full swing in the monastic communities by 7<sup>th</sup> century. In proving this, he mentions the references from travel account of Itsing, the great Chinese traveler who witnessed various ritual performances at Nālandā *Buddhist* University of Bihāra during his visit to India in 671 – 695 A.D. Thus, he concludes that rituals have roots in the monastic rituals followed in ancient monasteries like Nālandā.

According to Locke, *Buddhism* has been practiced as a religion by its followers and rituals were developed out of devotion. Rituals proliferated with the development of *Mahāyāna* and occupied a much more central role while *Vajrayāna* evolved. Citing the view of Sukumar Dutta<sup>32</sup>, Locke states that even *Theravādi* monasteries like Vallabhi had the practice of observing *Buddhapūjā* through the ritual image worship by the monks. Quoting the view of S.K. Warder, he further expressed that Rituals gave the *Buddhist* followers the means to live *Buddhist* way of life. The ritual enjoined by the local custom in the process of time gave cultural flavour and the *Buddhist* teaching did not remain as mere philosophy. *Mahāyāna Buddhism* adapted itself to the customs and habit of the ordinary people to draw them to the *Buddha*'s teachings. He concludes that rituals later superseded the *sūtras*, as the doctrine is to be acted out in tangible form, not simply understood mentally. And consequently, the ritual becomes more and more elaborate.

It was assumed that *Hindu* ritualistic complexities and *pūjā* systems were imbibed into *Buddhism* by the *tantric* cult. This view is highlighted in the book taking the reference of the text of Giuseppe Tucci. However, such view should be carefully analyzed for the truth could be reversed. On the other hand, it is also mentioned that rites and rituals performed by *Vajrācāryas* in Nepal were developed in India in

---

<sup>32</sup> Dutt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10)



the great monasteries such as Nālandā and Vikramśīla from eighth century onwards. Furthermore, the Tibetan and certain Japanese *Buddhist* sects, notably the Shingon sect, still perform the same rites and rituals. In that case, how could one say that rituals of *Vajrācāryas* are the copies of *Hindu* rituals. Locke puts forth the view that the buddhist masters, however, never adopted rituals for their own sake. It had a clear purpose and whenever they took up was integrated into the *Mahāyāna Buddhist* tradition. This view is well said as according to earlier *Buddhism*, rituals are regarded as futile and later *Buddhism* used rituals just as means or tools to enhance practice towards enlightenment. This must be the reason the masters never adopted rituals for their own sake.

However, Locke advocates philosophically the importance of rites and rituals in religion and mentions that in the eyes of *Buddhists* of all sects, rites with proper mental accompaniment are an absolute necessity; deprived of its supernatural contents, *Buddhism* would be no more than a system of ethics and psychology. So, properly understood ritual has a role in all forms of *Buddhism*. He further mentions that even the *Theravādins* and Zen followers, who are the most austere *Buddhists* perform quite elaborate rite morning and evening. The author suggests that spiritual power has to be recognized and worshipped- though certainly not as a creator god and what is worshipped in the *Buddha* is the principle of Enlightenment; man as his own savior depends on self power, that is to say his power of mind. He assumes that the *Buddhist* masters developed a special class of *Tantra*, the *kriyā tantra* to benefit people inclined to ritual as a means of overcoming their ignorance and the karmic effects of their sins. Though ritual played a subordinate role, it was a tool or psychological instrument the adept used to help himself to the realization and enlightenment he was seeking. *Tantric* rites and rituals involving *maṇḍala*, *mudrās*, *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs* seem bewildering and magical are not meant to be studied or read, but to be practiced, realized and lived. Therefore, the author suggests that we must rely on the testimony of experienced practitioners, and it should not merely be criticized on the basis of having studied the *Tantras* as the philosophical texts. He emphasizes their testimony is that it does work. He seems convinced that accomplished adepts attain to states of consciousness and acquire curious psychic powers not easily attainable by other means. Locke mentions that the ritual worship performed by the *Vajrācārya* and by their laity is all part of the common heritage of *Mahāyāna*-

*Tantric Buddhism* developed and practiced in the great monastic universities of India from the seventh century until the disappearance of *Buddhism* in India.

The author then describes various types of ritual offerings which are made to deities when a *Buddhist* visits a temple or performs worship at his home, with the help of the *Vajrācārya*. The popular offerings mentioned are *Pañcāmrita* (the five nectars), *Pañca-gavya* (the five elements), *Argha* (respectful reception), *Padya* (relating to the feet), *Tarpana* (libation), *Pañcopacāra pūjā* (the five-fold offering), and *Bali* (sacrificial offering of food). These offering are made with the recitation of the *mantras*. The author also remarks that the offering may be made mentally without any materials.

Locke elaborates the importance of the *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual in *Newār Buddhism*. This rite is the first ritual performed by a *Vajrācārya* at the beginning of every *pūjā* for purification of oneself, his *jajamān* (parishioner) and the surrounding area. He equates this performance in meaning to that of *Theravādins* taking *Pañca śīla* (promises of morality), and also to that of *Hindus* giving the gift of cow before undertaking any good work, so a *vajrayānist* can not undertake a spiritual work without performing the *Guru-maṇḍalā*. The author describes *Guru-maṇḍalā* also as the veneration and offering made to the *Guru*, the Teacher, (the triple gems- *Guru Buddha*, *Guru Dharma* and *Guru Saṅgha*) who is represented by *Vajrasattva*. The most remarkable point in *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual performance is repeated offering of parched rice and unbroken rice to the accompaniment of the popular *Buddhist* motto ‘*Ye Dharmā hetuprabhavā*’. Locke also remarks that all *Buddhist* sects, *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhists* alike have at least accepted this formula as a summation of the *Buddha*’s teachings and have used it as a motto or slogan. Custom of performing *Guru-maṇḍalā* in Nepal also justifies the saying that instead of concept of *Tri-ratna* (triple gems); *Catu-ratna* (Quadri gems) concept prevailed in *Nepalese Buddhism*, as pointed out by Rajendra Ram.<sup>33</sup>

Locke also describes the *Kalaśa Pūjā*, another basic ritual of *Newār Buddhists*. *Kalaśa* is a small flask or water pot which is used by the *Vajrācāryas* to summon the deity into it for worshipping. Locke explains this is an ancient Indian ritual

---

<sup>33</sup> The author of the text- Rajendra Ram, *A History of Buddhism in Nepal: A.D 704 – 1396*, (Patna: Janabharati Prakasana, 1977)

which is adopted by the *Buddhists* and is still in vogue. This ritual is followed after *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual. This is followed by an evocation of the personification of the water (*vajramritodaka*- the diamond nectar water). By means of this *Sāadhanā* the priest is supposed to evoke the deity and then come to a realization of its ultimate identity with the divine principle, the void (*śūnyatā*). The deity summoned into the *kalaśa* depends on the purpose of the ritual and the place it is being performed. As Locke mentions though the ordinary officiant at a *kalaśa pūjā* is the *Vajrācārya*, a *Śākya* may also perform it as a part of his private worship. This *pūjā* is carried out to show one's devotion, to satisfy, please and propitiate the deity, and to present one's petition. Quoting the mention of the editor of the old text *Kriyā Saṁgraha* where Locke got the text, he states- the main aim of the *kalaśa pūjā* is to make the deity present in the *kalaśa* by means of a *Sāadhanā* and then through the consecration (*abhiṣeka*) of the *kalaśa* to bring about a participation in *Nirvāṇa* itself. Locke points out to the worship and *samādhi* of the *nagas* during most of the *pūjā* including *kalaśapūjā*, especially of Vasuki *nāgarāja*, who is considered to be the ruling *nāga* of the valley at the present time. He corroborates this to the belief that the valley of Kathmandu was once the special abode of the *nāgas*. In *kalaśapūjā*, *nāgpan*, an earthen vessel with an image of a snake is used for worship of *nāgas*.

Also described in the text as another principal ritual of *Vajrācārya* is the *Homa* sacrifice. It is the offering of oblations to the gods by casting ghee and grains and other commodities into the sacred fire. He also discloses the probability that *Manjuṣrī -Mūla-kalpa*, supposedly an eighth century work, to be the first *Buddhist* text to detail about *Homa* performance. It is performed only by the *Vajrācāryas* for all of their elaborate *pūjās* and its forms an integral part of some of the life cycle rites, notably the marriage ceremony, caste initiation rites and the *dīkṣā* ceremony and consecration of images (deities). It is mentioned that the rite of the *homa*, called *jajñavidhāna*, gives the fruits of satisfaction, plenty and salvation to living beings, averts calamity and bring peace. The *homa* sacrifice is performed to the deity made present in the *kalaśa*, and, hence, it follows on the *kalaśapūjā* rite and is never performed separate from it. Above all it must be preceded by the *Guru-maṇḍalā* rite. In this *homa* rite, *Agni* (fire god) is personified and worshipped. *Vajrayāna* worship, which is a ritualization of the *Sāadhanā* of the deity being worshipped involve an evocation of *samaya-devatā* and *jnāna-devatā*. The two of them dissolve into one which is identified with the worshipper. If there is question

of a consecration of an image, the priest next infuses himself, now identified with the deity, into the image. Here he infuses the spirit of the deity *Agni* into the fire. Thus, Locke expresses both *kalaśa* and *homa pūjā* are ritualization of the *Sādhanā*, the *yogic* evocation of a deity.

*Sādhanā* is separately mentioned by Locke as a note at the end the first *Chapter* after describing principal rituals. He understands the importance of *Newār Buddhist* rituals which as he mentions are the ritualization of *vajrayānic Sādhanā*. The *Sādhanā* lies at the very heart of all *Vajrayāna* worship and its philosophy. Locke understandably defines *Sādhanā* as a visualization and evocation of a deity, which leads the worshipper straight to the goal of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* that is the realization of the void (*śūnyatā*) and the identification of the worshipper with it. In other words, the ultimate aim of the *Sādhanā* is to transcend duality by attaining a vivid conscious experience of the non dual state. Though *Sādhanā* is also termed as meditation, the author clarifies that a meditation which involves the visualization of the deity is actually the *Sādhanā*, and other forms of meditation should not be regarded as *Sādhanā*. The author also mentions that according to the recorded experiences of the masters it is the efficient method producing quick results, as opposed to the slow process of realization used in standard *Theravāda* and *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. He further points out that the great variety of the *Sādhanās* (the *Sādhanāmālā* contains 312 types) results from the different visualizations of masters, each of whom was an individual with his own individual experiences and psyche. He puts emphasis that the *Vajrācārya* rites such as the *kalaśa pūjā*, the *homa pūjā*, the *Guru-maṇḍalā* etc are a ritualization of the *Sādhanā*. But he points out that the structural lines of the *Sādhanā* remain, though often obscured by the profusion of ritual detail and removed from the context of meditation and *yoga*. The author also criticizes, though, admittedly, there are levels of understanding among those who make use of these rituals, and most of the present-day practitioners do not go beyond the level of ritual performed to please or placate a god. He suggests the rituals of the *Vajrācārya* can only be understood if one realizes their original purpose in the acting out in ritual of the *Sādhanā*. He concludes that *Newār Buddhist* rite and rituals were thoroughly *Buddhist*. He suggests that *Vajrācārya* should live up with prerequisites like the prior scholarship and the mastery of *yogic* techniques and meditation which are required for making use of such rituals. Abandonment of these prerequisites and too much use of rituals only for their own sake will be inveighed by *Buddhists* of all sects.

In conclusion Locke holds opinion that adoption of priesthood and ritualism by *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* is responsible for the decline of *Buddhism* in Nepal. “What is peculiar to *Newār Buddhism* is that *Buddhist* priests have taken over the role of the Brahmins as family priests who perform life cycle rites. The *Saṅgha* still exists at least in name, but the tradition has deteriorated. There is no more scholarship in the *Bāhās*. The *Dharma* is no longer preached and explained to the faithful, though it is evident from the large number of extant manuscript written and copied in Nepal that such scholarships did exist.

2.3 David N. Gellner. *Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest: Newār Buddhism and Its Hierarchy of Ritual*, London: Cambridge University Press, July 1992.

David N. Gellner was an anthropologist and a professor at Saint John’s College, Oxford. He is also a Reader in Social Anthropology, at Brunel University. He was engaged in the research of *Newār Buddhism* since 1982. Since then he has been to Nepal several times, notably in 1982 to 1984, when he did the field work in Kathmandu Valley. His book *Monk, Householder and tantric priest* published in 1992 by the Cambridge University Press, London, sheds light on the features of *Newār Buddhism*. Gellner is now an established name as the scholar of *Newār Buddhism*.

*Monk Householder, and Tantric Priest* is a detailed study of *Newār Buddhists’* psychology, philosophy, their social ethics, organizations, their economy etc. There are many misconceptions about *Tantric* religion, whether *Buddhist* or *Hindu*, mainly because scholars have relied exclusively on textual sources. Gellner has presented an account of how *Tantric Buddhism* works in practice. He described the way of life and social organization of the *Buddhist* city of Lalitpur, their relationship with *Hinduism*, and impact on ritualism in the life of *Newār Buddhists*. The study of the *Newārs* has wider implications to grasp how *Buddhism* works and worked in its original context of caste and *Hindu* ruler-ship. He places *Newār Buddhism* delicately and precisely in relation to other forms of *Buddhism* and *Hinduism*. Gellner has made an exhaustive study of *Newār Buddhism* including its development, religious synthesis with *Hinduism* and decline in later centuries due

to official patronage given to *Hinduism* and so the book stands as the definitive source on *Newār Buddhism*. But it is evident that he wrote the book more from anthropological viewpoint than religious. Howsoever, it remains as an important book to those interested in *Buddhism* and religious studies specialists, as well as to South Asianists, sociologists and so forth.

The book is organized into 12 *Chapters* which can be categorized into two parts. The first part (1st to 5<sup>th</sup> *Chapters*) is devoted to socio-religious aspects of Kathmandu Valley including principal rituals, festivals, and shrines (temples, *Vihāras* and *caityas*). The second part has the details on the emic “hierarchy of *Newār* tradition” of *Newār Buddhists* in order from *Śrāvakyāna* to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*, and on the monastic ideal, the *Buddhist* householders, *guthī*, *Buddhist* initiation, *Tantric* cult etc. It also deals with the monastic architecture, community life cycle rite, accommodation of caste, and the ritual and ideological legitimization of a householder *Saṅgha*.

Gellner says in the *Introduction Chapter* that this book is intended as a contribution to the anthropology of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in Kathmandu Valley where one can still find *Mahāyāna Buddhism* within a South Asian cultural environment. He admits that it was in search of this surviving remnant of South Asian *Buddhism* that Sylvian Levi, the great French Saṅskritist visited Nepal in 1898 and wrote its history. He further mentions that only in Kathmandu Valley there are still *Buddhist* texts and ritual handbooks in *Saṅskrit* having uninterrupted connection to the great North Indian centre of *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* of the late first Millennium. He argues that difference between *Newār Buddhism* and *Hinduism* lies in value, organization and significant homologies. He suggests that since *Newārs* view their religion primarily as a set of practices, it is their ritual and custom that hold the central stage. He labels *Newār* society and religion as unchanging and static and it would have precluded an understanding of the dynamics of the present. *Newār* religion is lived in many different contexts. The rhythm of the annual and life cycles rites of *Newār Buddhists* is also responsible for keeping these contexts apart and also in place. He believes *Buddhist* activists to be perhaps the biggest single group making use of *Newārī*. He also discusses how the name Nepal applied traditionally only to Kathmandu Valley.

Under sub-title '*The setting of the study*', the author describes about conduction of monastic activities. He mentions that membership in the monasteries is determined by matrilineal descent.

He praises that *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* have found ways of combining everyday life and religion. In the past *Buddhist* artisans used to chant *Buddhist* hymns while they worked. The life of an artisan or shopkeeper is indeed such as to permit a considerable amount of religious activity while they work. Thus, he indicates that people also stick to their religious practice while they work. *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* do perform more rituals as an expression of their *Buddhist* identity. Gellner was impressed at the amount of time, energy and money expended by *Newār Buddhists* on religion and rituals.

*Chapter Two* entitled '*Caste and religious affiliation*' has details on castes, caste hierarchy and their religious affiliation. According to Gellner, caste is even today the single most important determinant of a person's attitude, particularly of his or her religious identification. About the confusion regarding *Newār* caste whether they are *Buddhist* or *Hindu* he is mindful of saying of Oldfield<sup>34</sup> that *Newār Buddhism* is wholly and disgustingly corrupt. He also reminds the saying of Snellgrove<sup>35</sup> that it is *Hinduism* in all but name. He mentions that it is because of inadequacy of two kinds empirical and theoretical. Empirically *Newār Buddhism* has been described without any references to *Newār Buddhists'* own values and beliefs. Theoretically, such descriptions presuppose a Judeo –Christian definition of religion and religious allegiance which hinders comprehension of Asian realities. But as he mentioned, most of the foreigners' judgment is negative one like those of Oldfield and Snellgrove. He writes that *Newārs* knew the merits of different types of *Buddhism* and also about that their tradition falls short in certain respects. They do not reject the futility of ritual and spiritual hierarchy.

He notes that only *Brāhmins*, *Śākyas*, *Vajrācāryas*, kings, monks and revered ascetics are addressed with honorific auxiliary '*bijyāye*'. Superiority of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* to non priestly castes, including *Śreṣṭha*, was evidently built into

---

<sup>34</sup> H. Ambrose Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal*, (Delhi: Cosmo Publications, first published in 1880, reprint 1974,)

<sup>35</sup> David Snellgrove, *Buddhist Himalaya*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (Kathmandu: Himalayan Book Sellers, first Edition by Bruno Cassirer Publishers in 1957, reprint 1995), Pp. 106

traditional *Newār* culture, even though it is denied by *Śreṣṭha* today. He mentions that some Westerners like Sylvian Levi, Greenwold<sup>36</sup> etc called *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* 'Buddhist Brāhmans'. Gellner also highlights main occupation of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* along with *Newār* settlement (town planning) within *Maṇḍal*.

*Hindu* and *Buddhists* are described as *Shivamārgi* and *Buddhamārgi* respectively. Gellner mentions that resentment of *Buddhamārgis* against the *Vajrācārya*, certainly played a part in the support given to *Theravāda* monks and nuns who got now well established in the valley. *Vajrācāryas* no longer offer the only *Buddhist* alternative, at least for those willing to use *Theravādins* for lifecycle rituals. Gellner mentions that the only castes whose members would find it almost unthinkable to claim to be *Hindu* are the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya*s themselves and in addition, in Kathmandu the *Tulādhars* also followed them.

Gellner wisely discusses the religious status of the *Śreṣṭhas* between *Buddhism* and *Hinduism*. He indicates that one of the reasons of following *Hinduism* by *Śreṣṭhas* is that *Hinduism* is the religion of ruler-ship and the *Śreṣṭha* identify themselves as *Kṣetriya* so they inclined towards *Hinduism*. Gellner remarkably mentions that before the rise of Prithvi Nārāyan Shāha in 1769, *Śreṣṭha* made numerous donations to *Buddhist* monasteries, established *caityas* and fed monks (*Vajrācāryas* and *Śākya*s) as well as establishing *Hindu* temples. A large number of *Śreṣṭhas* has *Vajrācārya* priests. Gellner wonders as some religion was a simple function of caste status, but reasons why some *Śreṣṭha* have *Buddhist* priests, take *Buddhist tantric* initiation and support *Buddhist guṭhīs* remain not understood. He speculates- perhaps those *Śreṣṭhas* who have *Buddhist* priest today are *Buddhamārgi*. As regards *Buddhist* religious identity, Gellner mentions that the monks are the *Buddhist* elite and they are the only *Buddhist* in proper sense of the word. He concludes by saying that the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya*s are monks and *Buddhists* of such a highly eclectic kind that formed identification is no longer a simple matter.<sup>37</sup> It is precisely with *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākya*s that identification is straight forward; they are *Buddhist*. They are monk, albeit married, part time ones.

---

<sup>36</sup> Stephen M. Greenwold, "Monkhood versus Priesthood in *Newār Buddhism*" in *Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal*, Ed. Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf, (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd. 1974), Pp. 129-149

<sup>37</sup> Michael Allen, "*Buddhism without Monks: NewārVajrayāna Buddhism of the Katmandu valley*" in *South Asia*, 3 (1973), Pp. 1-14



He advises if we substitute *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* for monks, it captures an important truth about traditional Nepal for they also are elite persons. Gellner explains that Monastic status begins with Monastic initiation in which *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* boys spend four days as monks. It is reaffirmed annually at the festival of *Pañca-dān* in which they go from house to house, locality to locality begging alms. It is also reaffirmed whenever a *Vajrācārya* or *Śākya* performs an observance or life cycle ritual and has his head shaved. They and only they have the whole head shaved leaving no topknot (*ānsā*). He considers it as symbolic of their monastic status, which sets them off sharply against all others. In the past *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* kept their heads permanently shaved.<sup>38</sup> He also admits that attempt to place the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* as they are today within the *varṇa* system is forced. He does not believe in the saying that *Vajrācāryas* are the *Buddhists Brāhmins* and *Śākyas* the *Kṣetriyas*. In fact this is just an analogy and does not really work, he opines; even at the time of Sthitimalla they were not included in the list of thirty six castes. This is because of their monastic identity, outside the caste hierarchy although in fact, in their life as householders, they are inevitably and frequently concerned with their caste status. *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* are then, householder *Buddhist* monks. But some argue that anything which householders do is not really *Buddhists*. At the same time it is important to realize how strongly the monastic ideal exists also as a part of *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* which stress the equal validity or superiority of being a *Buddhist* householder. Gellner advocates from *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* viewpoint that being a householder is, no less than being a monk and nun. So, it was a harder path; not only difficult ritual obligation but also lifelong family responsibilities to be fulfilled in addition.

Gellner states that in *Newār Buddhism*, celibate monasticism, while authentically *Buddhist*, to be a first step towards higher statuses and mentions that celibate monasticism has highest prestige in some forms of *Buddhism* like *Tharavādi Buddhism*, Gelugpa order of Tibetan *Buddhism* while within *Mahāyāna Buddhism* there are many opposing views.

---

<sup>38</sup> H. Ambrose Oldfield, *Sketches from Nipal*, I (Delhi: Cosmo Publications, reprint1974, first published in1880), H. Ambrose Oldfield, *Sketches From Nipal* Vol. II, (Delhi: Cosmo Publications, reprint1974, first published in1881), P.139

According to Gellner *Vajrācārya* combines within himself the roles of teacher (*Guru*), priest of all kinds and also other roles as astrologer, patron etc. Gellner notes that there has been a tendency in modern times to homogenization of caste names. What used to be *Brahmacārya Bhikṣu*, *Śākya Bhikṣu* and *Śākya vaṃsa* are all *Śākya* today.

In *Chapter Three 'The relation of Hinduism and Buddhism: competition and coexistence'* Gellner has discussed the relation between *Hinduism* and *Buddhism*, their interaction, competition and co-existence. The *Buddhist* deities like *Śākyamuni* and other monastic deities (*Karuṇāmaya*, *Svayambhū*) of large monasteries both define the group formed by *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* membership and attract worship from outsiders, regardless of group membership.

Gellner also describes *Newār* religious culture referring to *Ganeśa* worship, *Gūnla* (the sacred *Buddhist* month), Four *categories of deities*. For *Newār Buddhists* the *Buddha* and important *Bodhisattvas* (*Karuṇāmaya*, *Manjuṣrī* and *Tārā*) occupy the highest level of the pantheon.

Gellner mentions that two cult of central importance in *Newār* religion, those of *Kumārī* and of *Karuṇāmaya-Matsyendranātha*, are very largely in the hands of *Buddhists*. Gellner reveals puzzling finding of Mary Slusser<sup>39</sup> that the Royal *Kumārīs*, the famous living goddess worshipped by *Hindus* as Taleju, Durga, must be chosen from among *Vajrācārya* or *Śākyas*. Like other writers Gellner also relates changes in *Buddhist* life style due to *Sthitimalla* and *Śankarācārya*.

Gellner also discusses about harmonious co-existence of *Buddhism* and *Hinduism* and mentions one of the touristic, journalistic and schoolbook clichés of modern Nepal that *Buddhism* and *Hinduism* exist there in peaceful harmony. He called it religious relativism.

Regarding coexistence of *Buddhism* and *Hinduism* Gellner clarifies that it always coexists with some more *Buddhist* system which provides for *Buddhists* worldly needs. He puts the view that as long as *Buddhists* do not worship *Hindu* gods for salvation, they do not break the *Buddhist* framework. If one accepts *Mahāyāna*

---

<sup>39</sup> Slusser, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 1), P.315

*Buddhists'* own view of what religion is – a soteriology that makes use of every means to lead suffering beings onto the *Buddhist* path- it is not syncretism.

Chapter Four '*Basic notions of Newār Buddhism*' deals about *Newār* religion, three ways of *Buddhism*, its concept, worship, Basic notions of *Newār Buddhism*. Gellner labels *Newār* religion as '*A religion of Worship*'. Gellner mentions that *Newār Buddhists* knew all the three ways of *Buddhism* i.e. *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* along with the three types of enlightened beings. With the rise of the *Vajrācārya*, however, even the householder was enabled to follow the path. Gellner mentions that *Newār Buddhist* practice has both monastic part and householder part. *Śrāvakyānacaryā* is for the monastic part of tradition and its main figure is the *Buddha Śākyamuni*. The term *Mahāyāna* is sometimes, though less systematically, used by *Newārs* to refer to Tibetan *Buddhism*, is opposed to the *Vajrayāna Buddhism* of Nepal. The central figure in *Mahāyāna* is the *Bodhisattva*. In *Vajrayāna* also called diamond way, the great *Buddha- Vajrasattva* and esoteric deities play central role.

Gellner reveals that the architecture of the *Buddhist* monastery has three shrines, among which one is dedicated to *Śākyamuni Buddha* concerning *Śrāvakyāna*, second one to the *Bodhisattva* like *Amoghapāśa Lokeśwara* concerning *Mahāyāna* and the third one, *tantric* shrine, to the esoteric deities concerning *Vajrayāna*. This also reflects the same hierarchy. Furthermore, this structure of three ways is built into *Newār* rituals and in particular to the sequence whereby a young *Vajrācārya* passes first through monastic initiation, then becomes a householder, and finally undergoes the consecration of a *vajra* master. On the traditional *Newār Buddhist* view, then all three ways were taught by the *Buddha*; the difference between them are explained by the fact that the *Buddha* adapted his message to the capacities and needs of his listeners.

He mentions that there is no organization to oversee uniformity of *Buddhist* practice except *Ācārya Guṭhī* of Kathmandu. Rituals are taught to young *Vajrācāryas* by their fathers or uncles or by learned teachers chosen for the purpose. Religion (*Hinduism* and *Buddhism*) in Nepal are founded each on their own set of doctrines. Doctrine is only taught in an *ad hoc* way so that the practicing priest can answer casual question about the ritual asked by the laity. The laity receives no explicit teaching on doctrine. Laymen and women, particularly women,

are taught by their mothers to make basic offerings. All other learning is a matter of personal choice. As John K. Locke did, Gellner also mentions that before doing any *Dharma* or worship, one must begin by performing the *Guru-maṇḍalā*. For *Newār Buddhists*, Triple gems mean the *Buddha*, *Prajñāpārāmitā* and the *Avlokiteśvara*.

There are separate paragraphs for elaboration on *Newār Buddhist* practice of generosity called *Dān*. The principal institutional practice for giving of gifts to the monastic community is the festival of *Pañcadān* which is based upon inspiring stories of *Vesantara* under *Vesantara Jātaka* etc. He reveals that according to *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, *Karuṇāmaya* is regarded as *Nāmasangiti* who is exoteric form of *Cakrasaṃvara*.

In *Chapter Five 'Basic rituals of Newār Buddhism'* Gellner describes rituals as the integral part of the religion like *Buddhism*. He stresses that *Buddhism* is basically a performing art and religion is a thing done, not a thing believed. He summarizes the different types of rituals encountered in *Newār Buddhism* as a preliminary approach.

Argument has been raised whether *Bare chuyegu* can be called monastic initiation or not in the context of Nepal. *Bare chuyegu* has become caste initiation not monastic initiation. However, Gellner preferred to call it monastic in every case as it is done in monastery (*Vihāra*).

*Chapter Six* entitled '*The Disciple way: The monastic Ideal in Newār Buddhism*' consists of description on monastic ideal of *Newār Buddhism*. Gellner describes *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* as hereditary monks and mentions that the claim of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* to be monks is in fact a crucial part of traditional *Newār Buddhism*. He further mentions that they, of course, are more than monks. He regards *Śākya* as *Mahāyānist* and *Vajrācārya* *vajrayānist*. He analyses the position of both *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* to be in an increasingly awkward in the present context as caste is officially frowned upon, no longer, has the direct support of law, and is known to be scandalous to foreigners. He also points out the fact that in the distant past any (clean caste) man could join a *Buddhist* monastery but now it is hereditary, was a frequent topic of conversation among *Buddhists*.

Taking the example of *Kwā Bāhāl* of Lalitpur, Gellner mentions that the place in which monasticism is most continuously and visibly kept up is the shrine of the principal deity of a monastery. Here the ancient rules are most clearly preserved.

Gellner also elucidates on popular ‘*The Cult of Dīpaṅkara*’ as the testimony that Śākya and Vajrācārya being monks act as the recipients of alms. It is prerogative of only Śākya and Vajrācārya to receive alms from the public laymen during *Pañcadān* and *Samyak* festivals which are known as the cult of *Dīpaṅkara*. The cult based on *Kapisāvadāna Buddhist* story has the key role of one of the past *Buddha* known by name as *Dīpaṅkara*.

In *Chapter Seven ‘The Great way (Part I) – The Buddhist householders, his duties and religion’*, Gellner elaborates on participation of the *Buddhist* householders in various religious aspects. He corroborates sacredness of the valley. For *Buddhists*, the sacredness of Kathmandu Valley is something unique. Festivals like *Matayā* which take the form of a local pilgrimage play a crucial role in legitimizing the view of Kathmandu Valley as a sacred space. Anachronistic *Adya Mahādāna*, *Āryavarta*, *Aṣṭavaitarāga*, *Dwādaśa Tīrṭha* also indicate the sacredness of the valley, local pilgrimage visit to which imparts merit making.

Regarding life cycle rites he mentions that *Buddhism* was not at first a religion of life in the world. He mentions that *Daśakarma* meaning ten rites are commonly followed by the *Newār Buddhists*, and in every life cycle ritual, *Guru-maṇḍalā* rite is performed.

He stresses upon the importance of religious observance like *Vrata* (a short asceticism) for the laity for smooth running of the religion. These observances maintain mobilization of the *Buddhist* laity. Gellner mentions that *Buddhist* observances in *Newār Buddhism* are ritualization of the eight precepts and are directed at different deities.

*Chapter Eight ‘The Great Way (Part II): Guṭhīs’* has the details on the working pattern of the *Newārs*, known as ‘*Guṭhī*’. He describes basic principles of the *guṭhīs*, types of *guṭhīs* mainly Lineage deity *guṭhī* and death *guṭhī*, public utility *guṭhīs*, caste council *guṭhī* like *Ācā gu* and mentions that *Newār guṭhīs* generally do not have economic aim except those of *Mānandhar*. Also mentioned are some

other *guṭhī* like *Tareṃām Saṅgha* (*bhajankhalah*) for religious singing, *Prajñāpārāmīta guṭhī* for recitation of the text, Wednesday *guṭhī* or *tutahguṭhī* for recitation of religious hymns. He also mentions about another important *guṭhī* known as *Siguṭhī*, or Death *guṭhīs*, *Sanuguṭhī*, *Dharmaguṭhī*, *Bicāguṭhī*. Gellner clarifies that the *Newār Buddhist* monastery can be regarded with some considerable justification as a kind of *guṭhī* whose point is to run a monastic complex.

*Chapter Nine* entitled ‘*The Diamond way (Part I): Priesthood and Initiation*’ is devoted to description of *Vajrayāna* which is described as special path within the Great way having both exoteric and esoteric nature. *Vajrayāna* is essentially a set of techniques involving meditation and elaborate rituals using forbidden substances. *Tara taiti tantra* – knowledge which saves from the cycle of rebirth is called *Tantra*. The author has discussed gods belonging to *kriyā*, *caryā* and yoga *Tantra*.

In *Chapter Ten* entitled ‘*The Diamond Way (Part II): The Regular Cult*’ Gellner refers to the quotation of David Snellgrove from *Hevajra Tantra* that before using gods and magical practices as means of whole scheme of release, practitioners should believe in those gods and magical practices for their own sake. This reference is true as *tantric* cult described in this *Chapter* seems revolving around the worship of the gods along with magical practices.

Gellner once again highlights the hierarchy of three levels of *Newār Buddhism*, the Disciple’s way, the Great way, and the Diamond way which are symbolically and practically represented in the organization of the *Newār* monastery and in their rituals. He indicates that in addition to popular three *kāyas* (bodies) of the *Buddha*, *Tantric Buddhism* added a fourth called variously the Innate body (*Sahajakāya*), the body of great bliss (*Mahāsukhakāya*) or the Self existent body (*Svabhāvikakāya*). He reveals that The *Kriyā Samuccaya* (an old text) has a long discussion of whether the *Śākya* or *Vajrācārya* should or should not be a monk. Its conclusion, heavily supported with *tantric* scriptural references is that in order to receive initiation the practitioner (the *tantric* initiate) should (i) have started as a monk but (ii) not be merely monk i.e. should have left that stage behind abandoning monk’s garb and shaven head. He also indicates *Śrāvakyāna* rite of Monastic initiation is given a *vajrayānic* terminology ‘*Pañcābhiṣeka*’ (Five consecration). According to him

regular rites are viewed as training the mind, as expressive rather than as immediately effective; exoteric worship is a preliminary to esoteric worship; and all worship is conceived as a soteriological exercise. Gellner also reveals that the *Samvarodaya Tantra* describes the characteristics of the *Vajrācārya* or *vajra* master which place him in high status. Gellner strikingly finds current *Newār* practice corresponding to daily practice of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*, mentioned in Advayavajra's *Bodhisattva (grhapati Bodhisattva)* in the *Kudristinirghātana* (Refutation of wrong views) compiled in *Advayavajra Saṁgraha*, a work belonging to 11<sup>th</sup> century.

In *Chapter Eleven 'The Uses of Tantra'* Gellner tries to show how the Diamond way legitimizes priesthood, provides a soteriology for individual through initiation and plays role in alleviation of worldly suffering through activities of *Tantric* healer. Gellner finds it very difficult in gathering information due to esoteric nature of *Newār Buddhism*. According to him, tantricism expressed and reinforced the solidarity of the lineage in much the same way for *Śreṣṭha* as it did for *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya*. *Tantric Buddhism*, and the gods of the Diamond way, have a crucial role to play for *Vajrācāryas*: they help to exclude others and to legitimize the *Vajrācāryas'* monopoly of control. *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* control of the cult is legitimized, as with exoteric deities, in terms of hereditary, caste, and sacerdotal life cycle. At the end of the *Chapter*, he indicates rapid social change in Kathmandu Valley, which consequently made traditional *Newār Buddhist* religion to have suffered a rapid decline in prestige, which is evident to all. He interestingly notes that position of *Vajrācārya* is also in decline while *Śākyas* have not suffered the same obvious and dramatic decline in prestige. Lastly, he concludes traditional *Newār Buddhism* was well adapted to a stable, strong traditional, and hierarchical society, but unlike the *Theravāda* or *Tibetan Buddhism*, it seems incapable of modernizing itself.

The last *Chapter Twelve* entitled '*Social and religious hierarchies*' is the concluding part of above *Chapters*. Gellner places anthropologically the position of *Newār Buddhism* somewhere between *Theravāda Buddhism* and *Hinduism*. According to him, *Newār Buddhism* has included all types of social elements and supplied enthusiastically any instrumental needs the laity may have while yet remaining fundamentally a soteriology. *Newār Buddhism* did retain a strong self identity. *Newār Buddhism* is also compared in short with *Tibetan Buddhism*,

Srilankan *Buddhism* with some reference to relevant *Buddhist* tradition in *Bali*, and Thailand.

Thus, this well produced work of David N. Gellner on *Newār* religion is a definitive landmark not only for scholarship on Nepal but for the wider field of *Buddhist* studies as well.

2.4 Todd T. Lewis. *Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal: Narratives and Rituals of Newār Buddhism*. Translations in collaboration with Subarna Man Tuladhar and Labha Ratna Tuladhar, (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2000)

Todd Lewis is Associate Professor in the Department of Religious Studies at the College of the Holy Cross. He also worked in other universities like Rutgers University (1988-89), Carleton College (1988), Columbia University (1983-1987), and the University of California, Berkeley (1983).

Professor Lewis gained expertise on the cultures, religions, and peoples of the mid-mountain, Himalayan region and the social history of *Buddhism*. *Buddhism* in Kathmandu Valley, particularly the traditions found among the *Newārs*, the indigenous inhabitants Kathmandu Valley has been his special subject of research on which he worked for more than twenty years. Capable of speaking local *Newārī* and national language Nepali language, he received doctorate degree in Religion from Columbia University (where he studied *Saṅskrit* and *Pāli*, earning his Ph.D. in Religion 1984), by writing thesis on “*Tulādhars* of Kathmandu Valley” in 1984. Professor Lewis' research and teaching has been interdisciplinary, linking anthropology and the history of religions.

In addition to scholarly books and articles published in leading Academic journals, Professor Lewis has shot, directed, and produced films for classroom use. He is mostly known from his *magnum opus* text “*Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal: Narratives and Rituals of Newār Buddhism*”. The book is the outcome of his research based on his field visit and stay of 6 years in *Newār* settlements in



Kathmandu valley, assisted by many Nepalese (significantly Labha Ratna and Subarna Man Tuladhar) and foreign informers/scholars.

This book explores some of the popular and pragmatic *Buddhist* traditions found among *Newārs* of Kathmandu Valley. It does so by translating and explicating a small sample of the many vernacular texts that have been incorporated into the text.

This book demonstrates how popular ritual texts and story narratives have shaped the religious life and culture of the only surviving South Asian *Mahāyāna Buddhist* society, the *Newārs* of Kathmandu. It begins with an account of the *Newār Buddhist* community's history and its place within the religious environment of Nepal and proceeds to build around five popular translations, several of which were known across Asia: the *Sṛṅgabheri Avadāna*, the *Simhalasārthabāhu Avadāna*, the *Tārā*, the *Mahākāla Vratas*, and the *Pañcarakṣā*. Lewis documents reveal how the respective texts have been domesticated in Nepal's art and architecture, healing traditions, and rituals. He shows how they provide paradigmatic case studies that transcend the Nepalese context, illustrating universal practices or issues in all *Buddhist* communities, such as gender relations and stupa veneration, the role of merchants, ethnicity, violence, devotions to celestial *Bodhisattvas* by kings and women, and the role of *mantra* recitations and healing rituals in the lives of *Buddhists*.

In the book, foreword is penned by well known scholar Gregory Schopen who highlighted one of the unique features of *Newār Buddhism* about treating the *Buddhist* manuscript. Nepal is the first Country to reveal the wealth of *Buddhist Saṅskrit Mahāyāna* texts and to make continuous supply of the same. He points out that *Aṣṭa Sāharsrikā Prajñāpāramitā* is solely based on manuscripts received from Nepal. Nepalese not only read, recite and make copies on occasions in pursuit of religious activities but also worship the text with aromatic powders, unguents, pastes etc. Most interestingly, they carry the text in procession exhibiting behavior which seems silly to the outsiders and implies a very different conception of the nature and function of sacred texts in culture, but is characteristic of South Asia. What *Newārs* are doing to the sacred text is the old practice recommended in the text to be done. The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* has several long passages directing both monks and laymen to worship books detailing its great value.

In the Preface, Lewis mentions that it is due to compelling popular tradition which motivated householders to support the monastic elites (monks) and to commit themselves to taking refuge in the *Triratna* and *Buddhism* could survive and expand throughout the history. He further mentions that *Buddhism* attracted ascetics with myriad meditative regimens, philosophers with vast doctrinal discourse and its mainstream traditions cultivating exemplary stories that defined living rightly in the world and rituals designed to help householders. On the basis of careful case study made selecting five important vernacular texts popular in *Newār Buddhism* Lewis concludes that certain popular and ritual texts contributed much to *Buddhist* religious life providing paradigms regarding the pragmatic adaptation of the faith. Those texts also help understanding of *Newār Buddhist* tradition.

In *Chapter I* entitled '*Introduction: Buddhism as a Pragmatic Religious Tradition*' the author holds the view that through celebration of *Buddhist* festivals, involving processions of statues through towns, and observances, there takes place communion between religious and laity. Without such activities the religion would be no more than an exercise of recluse monks. He advocates the importance of rituals in maintaining householders' adherence to *Buddhism* and to unify *Buddhist* communities, both spiritually and socially. Discussing on the development of *Buddhist* ritualism and the ritual innovation of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, he mentions rituals as important channel to reach the lay community and these have served as the pragmatic means for the laity to achieve health, prosperity, good luck, longevity, peace, good rebirth, progeny which are near universal wishes of humanity. The author explained how *Buddhism* developed pragmatic means to survive and achieve religious goal. He elaborates that hundreds of *Buddhist* stories including *Avadāna* and *Jātakas* about heroic actions of *Bodhisattvas*, *Buddha* or another spiritually advanced beings are the part of skillful means to demonstrate doctrinal points of the *Buddha*, matching teaching to audience. Such parables are found in all schools of *Buddhism*. The author points out that the stories were domesticated by relating their central characters and place of events to local issues. Familiarity with these narratives and their public recitation eventually became a recognized monastic avocation within a *Saṅgha* that include folklorists. He highlights public story telling as common practice in *Newār Buddhism*, which attract laity to the *Dharma*. The writer rightly says these stories also served themes for creation of early *Buddhist* art.

Lewis writes that local *Buddhists* grasp the significance of the religious teachings through examples and exemplar of such domesticated stories which establishes their localities as sites of *Bodhisattva* related actions and define their moral duties and ethnic identities. Such stories reach deeply into a society's collective culture. He, therefore, suggests that the popular stories domesticated in vernacular language within given localities must also be featured well though they can not be equated with basic *Buddhist* canon. He wonders why among the many hundreds of *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* available in *Saṅskrit* redaction which were conveyed into Nepal, few were adopted, domesticated by giving local identification, and repeatedly recited within the local *Buddhist* community. The author attempts to formulate reason for this through analyzing five popular textual cases. He also considers how *Buddhist* rituals derived out of those popular story texts. Adding to the importance of rituals, the author mentions all *Buddhist* rituals stem from the compassionate occupation, expressing devotion to the *Tri-ratna* and asserting their interrelationship; on the authority of the *Buddha*, the *Saṅgha* acts to utilize the *Dharma* to create mundane and supramundane blessing; domesticated *Buddhism* across Asia developed many avenues whereby monastic leaders adapted their lineage's resources as a 'Triple Jewels' to remain a compelling refuge.

He also presents a short account of Nepal and *Newār Buddhism* which, as every *Buddhist* scholar does, is credited to have preserved huge collection of Nepalese manuscripts written in *Saṅskrit*. *Newārs* are remarkably highlighted as able artisans, adapting and domesticating Indic ideals beautifully into their art. Presenting a short history of Nepal, he marks the conveyance of *Mahāyāna* traditions to Tibet from Nepal. It is also mentioned that in at least the last four centuries, *Nepalese Buddhism* has shared much in common with the domesticated forms of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in modern Tibet and Japan, notably with a householder *Saṅgha*. He mentions that religious focus of *Newār Saṅgha* is towards perfecting ritual expressions of the doctrine within society and preserving the *Dharma* via manuscripts copying. He too mentions the continuity of the "cult of the book" in the popular *Buddhist* festivals that involve the display of gold leaf manuscripts. The long standing *Newār* practice of copying manuscripts has given way since 1909 to the printing press, with the community showing great piety and energy in producing numerous *Buddhist* publications. He further elaborates that besides the exoteric *Mahāyāna* devotionism shown to *caityas*, great stupas like

*Svayambhū*, celestial *Bodhisattvas* and guardian deities, *Newār Buddhism* also has an esoteric level requiring special introductory instructions called initiations or *dīkṣā* or *abhiṣeka*. The author also remarks on declining state of *Newār Buddhism* with an effort to trace out the possible causes. Thus, he portrays nicely the practical aspects of *Newār Buddhism*.

*Chapter II* is entitled ‘*The Stupās and Spouses: The Sṛingabheri Avadāna*’. In this *Chapter*, Lewis deals in one of the important practices of *Newār Buddhism* of making and ritual veneration of *caitya*. The *caitya* occupies central position in every Nepalese monastery. He sheds light on use of the *caitya* and result of veneration of *caitya*, the physical representation of *Dharmakāya* of the *Buddha*, the power place, symbolizing Buddhahood’s omnipresence. Result of *caitya* veneration is also highlighted in the text.

Popular story of *Sṛingabheri* is translated in English which, as he mentioned is based on the text of Pt. Badri Ratna Bajracharya. The original source of this story is mentioned, as told by the *Paṇḍit*, to be from *Citravimsati Avadāna*. The author highlights about the par excellence on domestication of the story by *Newār Buddhists* through mythological framing it fitting to Nepalese context, and sites. As mentioned in this *Chapter*, the remarkable point in *Sṛingabheri* text is the position of women. In most of the religious texts, women were condemned for not being helpful in attaining enlightenment by men, but, to the contrary, the *avadāna* provides example that a good wife is essential for man to move towards salvation. The story is said to reveal *Buddhist* attitude toward married life that allude to an ideal of conjugal relations conflicting with the ‘misogynist ascetic’ perspective. Speaking on *Buddhist* defense of marriage, a message is given that many *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* stories do give sense that householders could and should make their marriage and family life conform as much as possible to the teachings of the *Buddha*. Thus, householders were also encouraged in *Buddhism*. The author also highlights the *Buddhist* ideal of recurring conjugal reunion in the story and beyond. Concept of recurring conjugal reunion is found in many *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* (*Divyāvadāna*). The connection between future *Buddha* and future *Yasodharā* is shown repeatedly. And, future *Yośodharā* was reunited with the *Bodhisattva* several times. In addition, the devotees’ pairings are also shown by aspiration to be husband and wife in next life to serve the *Buddha*. The author presents the *Buddhist* view instructing householders to make their familial relationships as fully

in conformity with the *Dharma* as possible. The good spouse was essential for eventually moving along the path toward *Nirvāṇa*. The popular textual tradition like *Śṛīṅgabheri Avadāna* inverts the monkish values. The story is told during and remembered through ‘horn blowing cultural practice’ in Kathmandu valley. A short account of widespread practices of *Newār Buddhism* under *caitya* culture, influenced by *Shringabheri* text is also given in the *Chapter*.

In *Chapter III- ‘Merchants, Demonesses and Missionary Faith: The Simhalasārthabāhu Avadāna’*, the author deals in yet another popular adventurous *avadāna* story known by the name the *Simhalasārthabāhu Avadāna* stressing upon its *Newār* domestication, evolvement of related ritual and relationship between *Newār Buddhist* community especially merchant class with Tibetan people through trade which lasted for a millennium. The *Chapter* also reveals that the early *Saṅgha* comprised about 30% *vaiśyas* (businessmen) who vied with kings to act as principal supporters. Connection between *Buddhism* and trade is established and it is reminded that wealth, though not the summum bonum, is ubiquitously held up as the reward for moral uprightness and pious generosity. The author mentions that the early missionary success of *Buddhist* monasticism must therefore be linked to the devout patronage and service of the mercantile class and in fact administrative practice of monastic officials depended upon generosity of the merchants. The author favours the view that the spread of *Buddhist* tradition itself motivated trans-regional trade; the alliances and wealth generated affected the entire Indo-sinic region which came under the web of *Buddhist* monasticism. He further mentions that *Buddhism* was regarded as good for business and the logic of *Buddhism’s* Diaspora, domestication and historical survival conformed, in large part, to the interdependent exigencies of trade, the expansion of monastic wealth, and the patronage of merchants. This is what had happened in the Himalayan region. The author suggests that the important role of *Newār* merchants and of the trans-Himalayan *Buddhist* trade network must be emphasized in the histories of both Nepalese and Tibetan civilization. *Newārs* for at least a thousand years were highly sought artisans across Tibet. It is so mentioned that for over 5 centuries, *Newārs* desiring the classical celibate monastic disciple, could take ordination in the local Tibetan *Vihāras*. This also proves that there were celibate Nepalese monks, though preference goes to non celibate householder type. It is also pointed out that *Newār* Lhasā traders sponsored the majority of extraordinary patronage events to the *Newār Saṅgha*.

Drawing Indic genealogy of the Sinhala Narrative, the author mentions that *Newārī* recension must have derived from early *Divyāvadāna* which inspired a longer *Mahāyāna* styled revision in the *Kārandavyūha* of earlier 7<sup>th</sup> century period. Nepalese version of the *Kārandavyūha* is *Guṇakārandavyūha*, a *Saṅskṛit* text in verse form devoted to *Avlokiteśwara*. The *Chapter* also contains the translation of *Newārī* version of *Sinhalasārthabāhu*, published by *Bhikṣu* Sudarshana in 1967. The story is about heroic deeds of Caravan Leader Sinhala who was the devotee of *Avlokiteśwara*. The domestication of the text is explained on the basis of theme of the story and then context of *Newār* Tibetan trade. The hero of the story is regarded as *Bodhisattva* and his large gilded image is enshrined in one of the Kathmandu's oldest *Buddhist* shrine (*Vikramśīla Mahāvihāra* of Thamel) dating back to the 11<sup>th</sup> century. The *Bodhisattva* is also publicly worshipped in the yearly monastery festival, during which an image of *Dīpaṅkar Buddha* is carried in procession around the city, accompanied by a gold-inscribed *Prajñāpāramitā* text housed in a palanquin. The author explains how articulation of the story is done to make it allegory implicitly inferring to the moral lesson to Lhasa *Newār* merchants of then *Newār* society. The author had thoroughly made observation on the history of Practical *Buddhism* (*Newār Buddhism*) and was fascinated by the pliability of *Buddhist Avadānas*, and the *Newār* adaptation domesticating by entering the life and logic of the local context on multiple levels.

In *Chapter IV* entitled '*Devotion to a Celestial Bodhisattva: The Tārā Vrata*', a short account of popular *vratas* or spiritual vows or ritual vows which are still observed in Kathmandu valley is given, explaining more on the *Tārā Vrata*. In the *Chapter*, the author reveals that "belief and practice" in *Newār Buddhist* context are not separate phenomena from anthropological standpoint. Talking about *Newār vrata* practice, he points out the rituals entailing doctrinal assertions and mentions a long segment in which the attendants hear stories (*vrata-kathā*) related to the origins, practices and boons associated with the rituals; the *vrata* also involves modest fasting, assembling offerings, chanting holy words declaring faith and taking refuge and participating in choreographed rituals that are common in the local tradition. The author remarks to examine *Buddhism* through rituals is one long neglected area of historical investigation while these rituals are equally important as they are based on *Buddhist* doctrines. He further points out that individuals starting from infancy are socialized into their religious identity by their

participation in rituals. Favouring the saying of Southwold, he mentioned ritual and belief ultimately impact humans through separate sensory-neural pathways.<sup>40</sup> In the modern age rituals are supposed to be baseless and useless. But the author has presented some brain storming quotations in support about the rituals like- ‘belief can not stand autonomously in meaningful anthropological analysis. Characteristic features of *vrata* are highlighted mentioning *vratas* as priest led and lay sponsored worship programs lasting one or more days. Details on *Tārā Vratākathā* (textual story), its domestication according to Nepalese context and the ritual practice related are nicely given. As the author mentions, *Tārā* cult is so popular in Kathmandu that it brought about a popular *Newār* greeting style ‘*Tāremām*’ (to be derived from *Tārā Saranam* meaning ‘I take refuge in *Tārā*’. The view is burrowed from Gellner.<sup>41</sup>

*Chapter V* has the heading ‘*Invoking the Powers of the Buddhist “Dark Lord”: The Caturdaśī Vrata of Mahākāla*’. The *Chapter* is devoted to details on *Caturdaśī Vrata* related to the powerful deity *Mahākāla*, its story and ritual practice. Also as mentioned in the *Chapter*, *Mahākāla* is regarded as protector deity, is also found inside the exterior niches of private home and monasteries. The short story is about how this deity comes to protect the *Dharma* as well as individual *Buddhists*. Also given is the English translated story of about establishment of free standing two roofed *Mahākāla* temple at Tundikhel, associated with the *Newār* myth of “first contact” with this deity by a local *Vajrācārya* adept named Sāsvat Vajra of *Mantrasiddhi Mahāvihāra*, the present *Saval Bāhā*. There is English translation of the story based on the local text of Badri Bajracharya. The author claims that *Tārāvrata* manual along with *mantras* mentioned in *Chapter IV* is intended more for *Vajrācārya* priests, while *Caturdaśī vrata* text is more for lay folk. The author also highlights domestication of the textual story labeling *Newār Buddhism* as practical *Buddhism* and communal tradition. He laid emphasis that the *vratas* in Nepalese setting also emphasize the interdependence between the *Saṅgha* and the lay community.

In *Chapter VI* with title ‘*The Refuge of Mantra Recitation: The Pañca-rakṣā*’ the author has presented in English translation of one of the most copied and used

---

<sup>40</sup> Southwold Martin, *Buddhism in Life: The Anthropological Study of Religion and the Sinhalese Practice of Buddhism*, (England: Manchester University Press, 1983)

<sup>41</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9)

*Newār Buddhist* text, *Pañca-rakṣā* including the *Dhāraṇī* and related stories regarding each of the five *Pañcarakṣā* female deities. He throws light in the pre-modern situation in *Buddhist* history, relevant views towards diseases and local beliefs concerned. He points out very low infant mortality rate which is still around 50 percent in the most underdeveloped regions. He mentions from *Mahākashyapa Avadāna* that those who get married must hear the loud bewailing of their wives uttered at the time of their offspring's passing away from this world. The situation was coupled with the occurrence of epidemics. Linking *Buddhism* to alleviation of suffering due to the diseases, the author cites the quotation of Conze<sup>42</sup> from *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* which assures, "A *Bodhisattva* will not be afraid in a district infected by epidemics..." and this led to understand how rituals made this fearlessness possible. The author tries to deal in use and efficacy of formula verses (*mantra*, *dhāraṇī* and *vidyā*) which are commonly found in the pragmatic religious practices shared by all South Asian religions and are believed to be composed by enlightened *Buddhist* saints.

One such ritual text is *Pañcarakṣā* which has linked lay folk's wishes for well being with the *Bodhisattva*'s vow for compassionate. Lewis tried to trace the history of *Pañca-rakṣā*. *Pañcarakṣā* deities are attributed to five senses, *Pañca-Buddha* and theory of emanation of *Tārā*. As mentioned the *Newār* recension of *Pañcarakṣā* is actually a collection of five *stotras* corresponding to *Mahāmāyūrī*, *Mahāpratisarā*, *Mahāsītavatī*, *Mahāmantranusārinī* and *Mahāsahāsrāpramardinī*. *Newārī* translation of the stories from *Saṅskṛit* done by Pt. Divya Vajra Bajracharya includes explanations of the powers underlying the related *mantras*, and dramatic testimonials to their effectiveness. Under the heading *Pañcarakṣā kathāsāra* (a compendium of *Pañcarakṣā* stories), *mantra*, meditation (*Sādhana*), and iconography sketches of deities are given along with the stories. Other details like relevant rituals, and sites are also included.

*Newār Buddhism* being ritualistic has various uses of *Mantra* and *Dhāraṇīs*. The author tries to justify this by citing several quotations which show that these were either way of *Bodhisattva* or *Bodhisattva* assume the form of uncountable spells (*vidyā*), of *mantra* and mnemonics (*dhāraṇī*) and various kinds of medicinal herbs, or they take the form of different sorts of winged creatures, animals, of *Yakṣas* and

---

<sup>42</sup> Edward Conze, *Buddhism, its essence and development*, (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2005)



ogres (*rākṣasas*). It is mentioned that the *Manjuśrī mūlakalpa* also connects *Bodhisattva* theory with taking refuge in *mantra* practice, making striking assertion that *Bodhisattvas* even become chants or their agents. The author marks the popularity of *Pañcarakṣā* through the availability of more than 50 different manuscripts. It is striking to note that Maiti Devi, a centrally located goddess in Kathmandu valley worshipped by most of the inhabitants including both *Hindu* and *Buddhist* is mentioned to be most probably the goddess *Mahāmāyūrī*, one of the deities among five *Pañcarakṣā* *devis*.

In the last *Chapter VII*, devoted to ‘*Summary and Conclusion*’, Lewis mentions that the monastic institutions which maintained *Buddhism* in any locality survived through interlocking economic, ritual, educational, medical, artistic, political, and meditation activities. Labeling *Newār Buddhism* as practical *Buddhist* tradition, it is concluded that the history of *Buddhism* can not ignore the fact that *Buddhist* institution like *Saṅgha* mediated the texts and shaped the history of *Buddhist* cultures. *Buddhism* is indeed not only philosophy and/or religion but also a way of living and being. He suggests that as texts were also put to use in the service of various ritual function, the ritual part of *Buddhism* should not be neglected. Throughout the social order, normative *Buddhism* exists. The idealizing paradigm of *Buddhism* dominated by aloof, meditating ascetics and controlled by intellectuals is unsuitable for portraying the typical *Buddhist* monk or nun; and it certainly can not stand scrutiny as model for the history of *Buddhism*’s doctrinal or institutional evolution. Following the view of Schopen, the author accepts that the actual monk, unlike the textual monk, appears to have been deeply involved in religious giving and cult practice of every kind from the beginning. He is preoccupied not with *Nirvāṇa* but above all else with what appears to have been a strongly felt social obligation. It is also concluded that story narratives are the central texts in *Buddhist* society. In *Newār Buddhism*, narratives are told and retold in public storytelling giving sense that it is much less individualistic, antiwoman, and antifamily than expected and giving quite homely atmosphere. The domestication of narrative tradition in Nepal points to the ritual process evident in the later history of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. And, *Buddhist* rituals were developed and sustained by those wishing to shape human experience consciously when literacy was rare. It was ritual practice that created and defined *Buddhist* identity and it was faith in the pragmatic powers of the *Buddhas* and *Bodhisattvas* accessed through ritual that held the centre of *Buddhist* tradition. The author further concludes that

attention to the content of locally domesticated vernacular texts and pragmatic ritualism is needed to hasten the development of study of *Buddhism*, free of idealization and the overestimation of the role elites played.

### Journal Review

2.5 John K. Locke, S.J. ‘*Newār Buddhist initiation Rite*’, *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of The Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Kirtipur: Tribhuvan University, Dr. Prayag Raj Sharma (Chief Editor), and Dr. Subhadra Subba, Dhanavajra Bajracharya, A.W. Macdonald (Editorial board), Vol. II, No.2, Year 2032, Pp. 1 – 13.

‘*Newār Buddhist Initiation Rite*’, a research article from the pen of John K. Locke is based on his physical observation of the event of *Bare chuyegu* at a monastery, *Machindra Bāhā* or *Jana Bāhā*, also known as *Kanak Caitya Mahāvihāra* in Kathmandu, which gave him opportunity to understand sociological and religious phenomenon of *Newār Buddhism* as practiced today. *Bare chuyegu* is the initiation rite of *Bare* for making *Bare*. John k. Locke writes in the article that scholars beginning from Hodgson down to the present day have noted several unique features in *Newār Buddhism*. He points out to meagre research done in the rites and rituals of *Newār Buddhists* and whatever have been written is marred by a lack of detailed knowledge on them. Here, he tries to refer to the texts mainly for the readings and recitations. He hoped the work will be useful to edit the actual texts.

He describes *Bare* caste, made up of two groups- *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*. They hold the clergy of the *Newār Buddhists* and are the custodians of the ancient *Buddhist* shrines, *Bāhā*. Among them, *Vajrācāryas* act as the family priests of all other *Buddhist* castes. He highlights *Bāhā* as the centre of their religious activities, where initiation of matrilineal descent group is carried out. It is only after initiation, he points out that one is entitled to be member of *Bāhā Saṅgha* and has share in the life and rites of the *Bāhā* where he was initiated. He mentions about *Saṅgha*, a term used from the earliest days of *Buddhism* to denote the community of *Bhikṣus* or *Buddhist* monks and office and function within the *Saṅgha* go by seniority of initiation.

He holds the view that difference between the function and status of the two groups- Śākya and Vajrācārya is clear from the initiation rite. He points out slight difference in initiation rite of Kathmandu and Patan, drawn on the basis of the article of Michael Allen appeared in South Asia and his observation. As Locke studied the case study of *Machindra (also Matṣendra) Bāhāl*, the rites mentioned also include some more features which are exclusive of this *Bāhā* only and may be irrelevant in other cases. Locke finds the main outline of the ceremony and the manuscripts used to have remained the same for at least 250 years.

Locke's description about features of a typical *Bāhā* (monastery) is no different from his other published books like *Karuṇāmaya* and *Monasteries of Kathmandu Valley*. He wisely justifies some major differences noticeable at *Jana Bāhā*, which he attributes to a disastrous fire in 1917 and a famous dominating free standing temple of *Seto Matsyendranātha* at the centre. He refers to a tradition which shows that the *Bāhā* and its *Saṅgha* predate the setting of the temple. He mentions that *Avlokiteswara*'s temple has completely usurped the place of the *Kwāpā dyo* in the life of the *Saṅgha*. Locke elaborates in short the architecture of the *Bāhā*, religious custom there in, and activities of the *Saṅgha* members. Also mentioned is composition and function of the *Saṅgha*.

The article has references about the Initiation rites are held at irregular intervals when optimum number of boys to be initiated is met to cover expense required. Boys, sons of the *Saṅgha* members, are generally initiated before their puberty. Locke mentions that the initiation ceremonies takes place on five different days spread over an eight –day period and the main event of actual *Bare chuyegu* takes place on the third day. He describes each of the five days under the headings (1) *Goya Dan tayagu*- ‘offering of betel nuts and money’, the act of applying for the initiation (2) *Dusala kriyā* – ‘preparatory rites’ (3) *The Bare chuyegu*- ‘the making of the *Bare*’ (4) *Cīvara kote vidhi* – ‘the rite of laying aside the monk's robe’ and (5) *Ācā luyegu* – ‘the making of the (*vajra*) *Ācārya*’.

Locke confessed that he could not observe *Cīvara kote vidhi* rite and *Ācā luyegu* rite as they were performed inside the *āgaṃ* where he was not allowed to enter. His details are based on descriptions made by his informants.

Actually Locke has explained the process of making of three principal *Buddhist* castes namely *Vajrācārya*, *Śākya* and *Udās or Udāya*. Making of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* is explicit while that of *Udāya* is implicit in his writing. He produced full and complete rites of initiation of *Vajrācārya*. When it is cut short excluding the fifth step *Ācā luyegu*, it fits to *Buddhist* initiation of *Śākyas*. He also reveals that failure to receive *Ācā luyegu*, after having undergone other initiation rites bars one from being *Vajrācārya* and he remains as *Śākya*. However, no discrimination is made between *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* candidates while carrying on initiation process as both are made participants in the same sitting till the fourth step *Bare chuyegu*. This must be the reason that Locke kept both these castes under *Bare*. Similarly, if the steps after *Cudākarma* (ritual cutting of hair and offering of loin cloth) are omitted, process becomes sacramental rites for the *Udās* or *Urāye*. Locke mentions that the giving of the loin cloth and the shaving of the head except the top knot is the initiation rite called *kayatā cuyegu* in *Newārī* and *mekhalā bandhana* or *cudā karma* in *Saṅskrit* for all of the *Buddhist* castes exclusive of the *Bare*. Locke indicates that if a son of *Bare* fails to take *Pravajyā* initiation he becomes an *Udās*, the caste ranked immediately below the *Bare*.

As Locke mentioned, the process shows how *Pravajyā* was made symbolic, and ritualized in *Newār Buddhism*. For example actual dispelling of darkness of Ignorance is symbolized by mere showing with blessing of lamp to the candidates by the *Upādhyāya priest* during the performance of *cudā karma* rite. Locke also recognizes the ritual welcoming of *Newār* tradition, which is performed by a leading lady (*Thakāli Nakin*) holding in her right hand the traditional key of a large *Newārī* lock, the other end of which is held by the candidate (invitee).

Locke writes that initiation ensures rights of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*, their membership into respective *Saṅghas*. *Ācā luyegu* initiation of *Vajrācārya* also ensure their membership in the *De Ācā gu Saṅgha* of 18 principal *Bāhā*. He also mentions that these two are the only castes which had to be registered in royal register after having undergone initiation. This act is still followed by visiting Hanumandhokā by the newly initiates and offering betel nuts and *pān* to the royal throne at Nāsal chowk of Hanumandhokā Durbār square. Locke regards Śāntikarācārya to be the progenitor of the *Vajrācāryas* and points out that all *Vajrācāryas* of Kathmandu are initiated into the *Vajrācārya's Saṅgha* of Śāntipur where he first initiated those willing to undertake the study and yogic training

necessary to receive the initiation. Locke mentions that originally anyone who has inclination to do so, could receive initiation. He discloses that *Ācā luyegu* rite is a shortened form of the *Ācārya dīkṣā* rite, comprising of full fourteen consecrations which is voluntarily conferred to the aspirant *Buddhists* some time in later phase of life.

It is evident from the description of Locke that when ordination (*Pravajyā*) is given, it becomes recipient's life long commitment to be stuck to refuge in *Triratna*- the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *San̄gha*. *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* are bound to this obligation even though they put aside monk's garb and return to householder's life. They are permitted to return to be householders but are vowed to abide by the precepts. They have sincerely followed this obligation.

Locke straightly disagrees erroneous impression expressed by some scholars claiming that *Buddhist* rites are a confused mixing of *Hinduism* and *Buddhism*. He opines that the *Newār Buddhists* are as authentically *Buddhist* as were the clergy of the late medieval monasteries of India and their lay followers who practiced the same rites and rituals. Locke feels the strength of *Newār Buddhists* in Nepal which kept *Buddhism* alive even today for some 800 years since its disappearance in Indian subcontinent.

2.6 Michael Allen, “***Buddhism without Monks: Newār Vajrayāna Buddhism*** of the Katmandu valley” *South Asia*, 3 (1973), Pp. 1-14

“*Buddhism without Monks*” is a research article written by Michael Allen, published in the journal *South Asia*. He is a professor of Anthropology in the Faculty of Arts, University of Sydney, Australia. He has visited Kathmandu several times and made research on *Newār Buddhism*. One of the popular books authored by him is ***The cult of Kumāri: Virgin worship in Nepal*** which also includes several aspects of *Newār* religion. Besides, he also published other books and scholarly articles on *Newār Buddhism*.

In this research article, Allen has attempted to give outline of the main features of *Newār Buddhism* in which he points out no organized monasticism for at least 700

years. The statement of Edward Conze that the monks are the *Buddhist* elite, is seen repeatedly quoted by most of the scholars dealing in *Newār Buddhism*, Michael Allen also borrowed this view. He makes it clear that he did not mean to challenge Conze's view but to support for such a peculiar form of religion, even maintaining that the *Newārs* are no longer true *Buddhists*.

He considers *Newār Buddhism* as the unorthodoxed non-monastic type having mass popular support while orthodox monastic *Buddhism* is dependent on the support of a powerful minority. Here, he indicates the former as the traditional *vajrayānic Newār Buddhism* and the later, newly revived *Theravādi Buddhism*. Allen reveals that orthodox monastic *Buddhism* with full time professional renunciators, having root from a very ancient Indian belief enjoyed support through the patronage of a powerful minority rather than the enthusiasm of general laity. For this he gave examples that great monastic institutions flourished in India during Aśoka period (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), Kaniṣka time (78 – 101 A.A) and so forth.

If the religion is to survive, he says, popular support from the laity is the decisive requirement. He favours the saying that something attractive must be offered to the laity than the remote and not very enticing prospect of full time monastic celibacy. He has therefore discussed about lack of appealing attitude in *Theravāda* for the laity because the main hope offered to the laity in *Theravāda* is to build up a pool of merit through observing the basic precepts and by support for the monks and their monasteries. He also indicates to important accommodation of lay interest in Thailand by introduction of exclusive practice of short term monasticism giving them a chance of attaining the religious goal.

He quotes referring to Melford E. Spiro that Burmese people adopted various ways to transform orthodox *Theravāda Buddhism* into a popular religion. He admired development of *Kammatic Buddhism* (non-renunciatory soteriology) with incorporation of several protective rituals, in which the laity are offered more tangible rewards than the nothingness of *Nirvāṇa*. He mentions Spiro's interpretation that development of *Kammatic Buddhism* in Burma is the result of gradual reduction of royal patronage. He also considers development of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* shortly after the demise of Aśoka in India in third century BC as an ideological development specifically based on the desire to assist the laity to attain salvation. However, he points out that, orthodox *Mahāyāna* though still

commending monastic celibacy as the surest way to gain enlightenment, does not exclude the possibility that virtuous layman may have similar success.

With the development of *tantric* doctrines, most probably via the agency of individual *yogins* who were themselves operating outside the monastic system, he states that superiority of monastic renunciation is challenged during seventh century. Efficacy of rituals also grew along with this and those who can generate sufficient power through meditation and various associated ritual procedures gain immediate salvation. He wonders, indeed, with exception of Nepal, there is no country where any form of *Buddhism* has managed to survive without a well defined monastic core. In contrast to Conze's assertion, he evaluates, that *Buddhism* can not survive without monks, they too disappeared from the Indian scene.

He describes *Newār* as non Indo-European speaking people, inheriting an ancient and rich culture. He carried out his field research in Patan, which he describes in brief as the city of *Newārs* and major *Buddhist* centre with numerous monasteries. He has also given its short history mentioning about Indian emperor Aśoka's visit and account of Hiuen tsang, the great Chinese traveler and mentions that thousands of monks resided in this city during the early centuries of the Christian era. According to him, the statement that Tibetans regularly visited Patan in search of texts and teachers from 7<sup>th</sup> century onwards is enough to assume that Patan had great strength of *Buddhism* for next few hundred years. He recalls David Snellgrove's statement that it is a kind of vast university-city differing little in its mode of life from similar towns in medieval Europe. In fact, its buildings, its traditions, and its way of life, must have been modeled on the great monastic universities of central India.

He mentioned about declining state of *Buddhist* monasticism (celibate ?) and presence of *Mahāyāna* followers not subscribing to esoteric cult, in thirteenth century. Referring to quotation of Dilli Raman Regmi, a Nepalese historian he points out that there were monasteries in Nepal both with and without monks when Dharmaswami, a Tibetan monk stayed in Nepal from 1226 to 1234 A.D. He notes that the *Muslim* destruction of the great north Indian monasteries preceded the Nepalese decline and this must have weakened the position of Nepalese monks with the loss of communication between them. He also points out that the *Malla*

rulers succeeding *Buddhist Thakuris* were also responsible for the further decline in *Buddhist* monasticism. Allen clarifies his intention of knowing the underlying reason which kept Nepalese *Vajrayāna Buddhism* surviving for seven hundred years than explaining about decline of monasticism. He pin pointed the shifting of support base from the powerful minority to the general population providing some kind of valued service for the laity is the reason of continued survival of *Newār Buddhism*. He praises *Newārs* for having developed *Buddhism* from elitist monasticism to popular folk religion partially by maintaining their *Vihāras* as temples open for public worship, partially by offering their priestly services to laity and partially allowing the sensory temptations like meat, alcohol and so forth under specific ideology. He also considers a large number of popular cults developed by the *Newārs* based on the worship of deities with miraculous powers to assist mortals giving way to celebration as public festivals, to have worked well in popularizing the religion. Allen has elucidated it rightly with the example of *Matsyendranātha* deity who is wholly owned, administered by and ritually controlled by *Buddhist* priests.

He states that *Newār* caste is organized on a classic *Hindu* caste basis but remains different in not having any *Kṣetriya* (ruler or warrior). Some castes are regarded as *Buddhist*, others as *Hindu* and yet others as mixed. He specified that unequivocally *Buddhist* castes are the *Bare* and *Urāy*. *Jyāpus*, he mentions, are regarded traditionally as *Buddhist* but increasingly turning to *Hindu* priests and rituals. Besides these castes, he finds difficulty and in many ways meaningless to try to identify the great majority of *Newārs* as either *Hindu* or *Buddhist*. But he mentions the criterion that those who use Brahmin priest may be classed as *Hindu* while those using *Gubhāju* (*Vajrācārya*) may be classed as *Buddhist*. He indicates that eighty percentage of Patan *Newārs* are *Buddhist*.

He notes that *Bare* claimed to be the direct descendant of the medieval monks and the principal custodians of the *Buddhist* tradition; most of them still live in or close to monasteries. According to him, a small section of *Bare*, known as *Gubhāju* are the direct *Buddhist* parallel to the *Deo Brāhmins*, having the hereditary right to practice as *Purohits* or family priests. However, all the *Bare* including both groups are counted as *Saṅgha*, a *Saṅskrit* word which means celibate monastic order. He found some 142 *Vihāras* still standing around Patan city. Allen elucidates that the sites of many *Vihāra* have been occupied by similar structure for at least 1200



years. He holds the view that present *Vihāras* have preserved ancient style though none of them is older than perhaps three to four hundred years. He made two differentiations of the *Vihāras*- *Bāhās* in larger number and *Bahi* in smaller number. He concedes that some of the leading *Bahis* among 25 are very ancient buildings and their members are known as *Bare Bhikṣu*.

Allen presents data that among 117 *Bāhās* of Patan, there are 18 main or great *Bāhās* where *Bare* initiation is carried out. He finds that the number of main *Bāhās* always remained constant at eighteen even though there can be new *Bāhās* added by new construction. Likewise there are 45 (18 affiliated to *Ācāryaguṭhī* and 27 others) main *Vihāras* in Kathmandu, 18 in Bhaktapur, 3 in Thimi, 1 in Sankhu, 1 in Banepā, 2 in Panauti, 1 in Khampu, 1 in Nālā, and 1 in Dolakhā. In addition to these main *Vihāras*, there are other *Vihāras* also. He mentions that there are altogether 332 *Vihāras* (*Bāhā* and *Bahi*) in the Kathmandu.

He gives details of the main features of a typical leading *Bāhā*, which are similar to those mentioned in any relevant texts. He mentions of images of *Mahānkāla* and *Ganeśa*, two protective *Hindu* deities, positioned as guard on either sides of the entrance to the *Bāhā*. He also notes that, once a month the most senior member of the *Saṅgha*, either alone or accompanied by a *Gubhāju* priest, worship the resident divinities.

Allen has discussed about the composition and functioning of the *Bāhā Saṅgha* protecting and up keeping *Bāhā* property. He notes that included in *Bāhā* property, most of the extensive landholdings of the period of *Thakuri Newār* kings (c. 750-1150 AD) was confiscated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Rānā rulers in order to finance their wars with Tibetans and British.

He puts forth the view that *Bare* may be said to be practicing *Buddhism* in so far they are members of well organized associations (*Saṅghas*) based on the possession of specifically *Buddhist* sacra, maintain and administer *Buddhist* shrines (*Bāhā* and *Bahi*), and provide the general public with an opportunity to gain merit by performing *pūjā* by making offerings to the main *Bāhā* divinities.

He also mentioned about three important *Bare* initiation rites- *Bare chuyegu* (the making of *Bare*), *Ācāluyagu* (the making of *Vajrācārya* or *Gubhāju*) and *Dekhā*

(entering to esoteric or mystic practice) and discussed about their conduction and significance in *Newār Buddhist* society.

Having undergone *Bare chuyegu*, for next four days the boys, wearing their tiny and perfect replica of monastic garb including gown, sandals, begging bowl and staff, act the role of monks. After a long and complicated disrobing ceremony the boys renounce the monk's life (*Śrāvakyāna*) and enters into *Mahāyāna* which offer them to achieve enlightenment as lay householders. Of the two sections of the *Bare*, the smaller and superior *Gubhāju* ensure their right to act as family priest by undergoing second ordination known as *Ācā luyegu*. *Vajrācārya*'s son failing to receive this ordination becomes a *Bare* of the *Śākya* kind. One of the rites indicates most graphically the radical anti celibacy of the form of a *Buddhism* associated with *Gubhāju* priesthood. *Ācā luyegu* confers on the novice the right to perform a limited range of *Vajrayāna* rituals, consisting of those routine rites mostly associated with client's life cycle and with purificatory rites. They do not however give the right to perform esoteric *vajrayānic* rituals known as *Guhya* (secret *Pūjā*) unless *Vajrācārya* take another Initiation, *Dekhā*. It is estimated that only 20% of *Gubhājus* in fact enter the profession of priesthood. According to Allen, *Dekhā* is large scale affairs taking place at irregular and infrequent intervals, carried out by *Gubhāju* of outstanding fame, with his wife as joint initiator. *Dekhā* is generally conferred to initiated novices in pairs together with a female partner either their wife or such close cognates as sisters or nieces. Knowledge of non duality given symbolic union of *Prajñā* or wisdom (female) and *upāya* or method (male) ritualistically and symbolically to the initiates.

Allen puts forth his view that while *Bare chuyegu* may be said to constitute a symbolic initiation into monkhood, and *Ācā luyegu* into the profession of family priest, and the *Dekhā* constitute an initiation into a still narrower circle of *vajrayānic* mystics. In cultural terms, the rites initiates the boy into *Buddhist* traditions in which the three great doctrines of *Hinayāna*, *Mahāyāna*, and *Vajrayāna* are represented as being increasing high forms and of increasingly greater relevance for the boy. He considers the ceremony as an encapsulation of the whole history of *Buddhism* amongst the *Newārs*.

Allen notes the most distinctive feature of the whole *Dekha* complex as the notion that *Vajrasattva* and his female counterpart are in continuous possession of the

main *Gubhāju* and his wife, called *Gurubā* and *Gurumā* respectively, a fact which they periodically and stylistically affirm by shakings and twisting. The novices, themselves paired off as male and female, worship a divinity, which is fully bisexual and in possession of a man and a woman.

Allen advocates the high philosophy behind *Vajrayāna* pantheon following *Dekhā* that total monastic *Buddhism* with all its vows and abstinences is the appropriate road to enlightenment for those of weak intellect, who have the proclivity for deviation from the path; the vows protect them from attachment to sensuality. Provided one has a strong intellect, the quickest and most effective way to achieve enlightenment is to obliterate the self not by abstinence but by wise self indulgence.

2.7 Stephen M. Greenwold. “**Monkhood Versus Priesthood in *Newār Buddhism***” in Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf (Ed.), *Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal*, (Warminster: Aris and Phillips Ltd. 1974), Pp. 129-149.

Stephen M. Greenwold had stayed in Kathmandu for 22 months and studied closely the *Newār* culture. Having experienced in his subject while in Nepal he authored debutant research articles like “Monkhood versus Priesthood in *Newār Buddhism*”, “*Buddhist Brāhmins*” (which later published in the title “Role of Priests in *Newār Society*”), “Religious belief in a *Buddhist Merchant Community, Nepal*”, and so forth. Greenwold has attempted to investigate the problem whether 'monkhood' is an inherent characteristic of *Buddhism* or not and by what standards *Newār 'Buddhists'* are to be judged.

In the present article “**Monkhood versus Priesthood in *Newār Buddhism***” Stephen M. Greenwold mentions that most of the western scholars, beginning from Brian H. Hodgson, along with Henry Oldfield<sup>43</sup>, Sylvian Levi<sup>44</sup>, David Snellgrove and so forth condemned *Newār Buddhism* as corrupt, degenerate or decadent mostly for the replacement of *Buddhist* monks by the hereditary caste of priests, and in lacking proper monastic system. Western view on *Newār Buddhism* relies

---

<sup>43</sup> A British writer of the mid nineteenth century,

<sup>44</sup> The Great French Indologist,

much upon Hodgson's comments as he is supposed to be the pioneer in doing research work on *Newār Buddhism* which is based on his twenty seven years stay in Nepal in early nineteenth century.

Greenwold admits that *Newār Buddhism* is no longer characterized by a separate body of celibate monks or nuns as correct, as per observations made by all these scholars. But, he held the view that this transformation is to be faulted is an opinion which can only be upheld when *Newār Buddhism* is judged according to the precepts and institution of orthodox *Buddhism* and thus found to be "aberrant and corrupt". Another, and perhaps more fruitful, area of inquiry, as Greenwold suggests, is the attempt to understand *Newār Buddhism* within the context of the changes that have occurred in the *Newār* society in terms of its own ideology and institution.

Greenwold points out that those western scholars who have written about *Newār Buddhism* earlier, have chosen to judge it in the light of orthodox *Buddhist* monastic practice and they found *Newār Buddhism* deviant as orthodox monastic institutions no longer are to be found in *Newār Buddhism*; the orthodox monkhood has been replaced by a caste of hereditary and married priests. However, by labeling it as degenerate or corrupt, he states that one is not analyzing or understanding *Newār* religion but only dismissing it. Monasticism is central to most *Buddhist* sects and hence must be dealt with if one is to understand such forms of *Buddhism*; the priest is essential to *Newār Buddhism*, and his role must be understood if one is to understand anything about *Newār Buddhism*.

He gave current picture of *Newār Buddhism* with the central figure, the hereditary caste, *Bare* whose members claim the status of pure *Buddhists* on the ground that they alone are the inhabitants of *Newār Vajrayāna* monasteries. They alone believe to have been ritually purified and ordained as monks, because of their extraordinary spirituality. He further elaborates that term *Bare*, shortened form of *Bande* or *Bānra*, signifies the special sanctity of men who though householders retain the right to have their heads completely shaven, a symbol of celibacy and renunciation. According to him, the *Bares* are able to maintain their monopoly of the spiritual and secular benefits which accrue to them, through the control of *Vihāras*- their institutions. So, Greenwold seemed convinced that the *Bare*, by virtue of their control of the *Vihāra* and its deities and shrines, lay claim to and

validate their common status as an assembly (*Saṅgha*) of the elect. He clarifies that though the term *Saṅgha* usually means a community of celibate *Buddhist* monks or nuns but in the *Newār* context refers to an ecclesiastical corporation of *Bare* who have been ordained as monks in a common monastery and though they are married constitute that monastery's personnel. He mentions that this transformation of *Saṅgha* into a closed caste-delimited corporation has been concomitant with the development of an elaborate corpus of *Tantric* rituals based upon esoteric doctrines known only to them as they are the only adepts specially initiated, and qualified. Thus, he makes assertion that it is the *Bare*, the only *Newārs* eligible for initiation and membership in the *Saṅgha*, who are empowered to employ advanced *Buddhist* meditative practices, to perform special *tantric* rites and serve the special *tantric* deities housed within their monasteries.

He also gives a short account on monastic working pattern of *Bare* through their *guthī* and concludes that the privilege of undergoing ordination as a monk entangles one (*Bare*) in a web of binding responsibilities. He also explained functioning of the monastery and monopolizing role of *Bares*. He also puts forth the *Bare*'s viewpoint about the existence. *Bare* sees the world as governed by a condition of dependency: children are dependent upon parents; the individual upon the family; the family upon the caste; the caste upon the community; and the community upon the gods. He further explained Human life as involving inescapable relationships of dependency and of reciprocal obligations and asserts the *Bare*'s view that to be human is to fulfill them. According to him, for this reason *Newār Buddhists* undergo a special series of ceremonies of consecrations and purification and follow a special series of ritual observances thereby gaining knowledge of a mystic and magical nature. But, he makes a note that only specially initiated may participate in such mysteries.

He points out to differing attitude of *Newār Buddhists* towards the achievement of liberation. They do not demand that one abandon the social world for the attainment of deliverance. He elaborates that the *Bare* reject ascetic renunciation, and become supra-human beings who have passed beyond the impotence and suffering of ordinary existence through the adoption of the opposite of renunciation, namely the celebration of earthly pleasures and through the sacrificial enjoyment of all that is normally rejected and condemned by *Buddhist* monks: alcohol, meat, fish, and ritual copulation.

Greenwold makes a comparison between celibate monks and *Bare*. He states that though the goal is same for both, the monks attempt to attain it by disengaging himself from all that is human, social and physical and by suppressing and extinguishing all passions, emotion, and human attachments while the *Bare* attempt to attain it by the ritual use of *tantric* reversals through celebration of .3earthly pleasures. So, the monk's way is the rejection of the social world, its rules and conventions and so is personal and unstructured where as the *Bare* reject the concept of ascetic renunciation as well as the exaltation of the unstructured and the liminal.

He also describes *Bare* as highly structured and hierarchical social caste system following elaborate and complicated ritual procedures which are difficult to master and to perform. He mentions that to be *Bare* is justified in terms of *Karma*: those who led lives guided by honesty and righteousness win the right to be born not only as mortals but as *Bare*. All male *Bare* must be incorporated into the caste of *Bare* and this is accomplished when the boys are made symbolic monks through a ceremony of ordination called *Bare chhuyigu*. Thus the *Newār Vihāra* is a matrilineal descent group. He revealed the assumption that all are thought to be born impure, but only some men are then purified through a series of special ceremonies (*samskāra*) which included *Bare chhuyigu* and all other crisis ceremonies conferred to *Bare*. Purity therefore is seen as being derivative of purificatory ceremonies/rites and not as a natural state. He opines that the *Bare* claim high caste rank because they undergo the largest number of such rites among the *Buddhist Newārs* and thus they alone have removed the taint and impurities of the natural and physical and they alone have been rendered fit for the pursuit of the sacred.

Greenwold describes in short the rite *Bare chhuyigu* and mentions that the boys promise to uphold the five precepts and to seek refuge in the *Tri-Ratna*. He also elaborated the activities or duties and restrictions of ordained boys after *Bare chhuyigu* till their disrobement of monk's robes. He notes that a *Bare* is considered to be in a state of special sacredness during this period and this is also maintained when he serves as temple priest.

He also notes that all *Newār* boys impersonate world renouncers and this renunciation is symbolically and ritually marked. The difference between the *Bare* and other *Newār* castes of clean status is that the former become *Buddhist* monks (*Bhikṣus*), the latter *Brahmachārin*; the former have their heads completely shaved, the latter retain the sacred tuft of hair.

He highlights the affirmation of caste and Kin ties through the ceremony of ordination by discussing the role of other *Newār* castes like *Nau* (Barber), and kin relative *Jichā-pāju* (novice's father's sister's husband). Though it is the duty of *Thāpāju* (the senior most *Bare* of the *Saṅgha*) to cut the tuft of hair of novice, this right of honour is given to *Jichā-pāju*. Greenwold interestingly explores the reason behind and finds this substitute fit as *Jichā-pāju* has high status in the family because he is the wife receiver. Moreover, he points out that father's sister (*Nini*) who catches the novice's hair as it is shaved and worships it during the four days he is a monk; and mother's brother (*Pāju*) who holds the boy at various times during the ceremony also have responsibilities to perform ensuring their unique family ties. All three (*Jichā-pāju*, *Nini* and *Pāju*) must also observe the same dietary restrictions as the novice himself and for the same length of time.

Greenwold also mentions that *Newār* monasteries once housed real monks who converted to married *Bare* later. He believes that in those days those who were true *Buddhists* did become monks and that anyone from any caste could and did become a monk.

While withstanding several allegations leveled against it, Greenwold notes that *Newār Buddhists* in the last quarter of twentieth century have been influenced by *Theravādin* doctrines and Tibetan *Vajrayāna* doctrines. He finds some *Newār Buddhists* who acknowledged that some of their customs are corrupt. Nepal is told as a land where *Buddhism* and *Hinduism* live side by side in perfect harmony: the *Buddhists* regard the *Hindu* gods as different manifestations of the supreme godhead, the *Ādi-Buddha*.

Greenwold draws some suggestions for the *Bare* to maintain their status as they continued to recognize and employ a body of symbols relating to the traditional monastic apparatus. They need to justify ideologically their superior ritual and caste status on non *Hindu* religious tradition. They also need to validate their

priestly caste while they retain their identity as *Buddhist*. They faced with a lack of traditional and sacred literature which justifies and validates their exclusive right to function as a sacred caste of priests. As he noted, their justification is based on the their claim that they alone have right to reside in and to control the religious apparatus of present day *Newār* monasteries because they are the descendants of their former orthodox *Buddhist* monks; that they should be at the top of the caste hierarchy because they are the ones who come closest to approximately the life of the *Buddhist* monks; that they alone among present day *Newārs* have the shaven heads and are the occupants of monasteries; that they alone have attempted to follow the path of the *Buddha*; and that they alone have earned a degree of spirituality because they alone have been ordained as *Buddhist* monks.

Considering a mythological account, he alludes the deviations in *Newār Buddhism* to be due to the *Hindu* reformer, philosopher and mystic, Śāṅkarācārya, probably the seventh incarnation who vanquished *Grihastha Ācārya* of Kathmandu valley. If this incidence is true, it indicates the paradoxical presence of householder *Ācāryas* during Śāṅkarācārya's time.

He has explained the cause of development of tradition of involvement of one's paternal aunt and her husband in *Bare Chuyigu* rite taking the example of case of *Pingala Bāhāl*, the boys of which were ordained by the *Bhikṣus* who happened to be their uncles as there were no *Bhikṣus* left at that *Bāhāl* due to Śāṅkarācārya's influence.

He concludes that the *Bare* are not true monks but both "monks" and "householders". He called them *Bhikṣu-grahastha*. On the religious level, they view the state of monkhood as merely an elementary stage that must be passed through as one progresses toward Enlightenment. They thus become monks only to repudiate the state of monkhood. He notes that renunciation and asceticism are rejected and replaced by the role of hereditary priests, and yet the ideology of the *Buddhist* monkhood is still used to validate the new institution of a priestly caste.



2.8 Siegfried Leinhard. “**Nepal: The Survival of Indian *Buddhism* in a Himalayan Kingdom**”, in *The World of Buddhism, Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich (Ed.), (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1984, Reprint 2007),

Professor Siegfried Leinhard of Stockholm is the foremost European expert in the literature and religion of the *Newārs*, the inhabitants of Kathmandu Valley. He gained his expertise through two decades of field research of the *Newār Buddhist* community in Nepal. To his credit are the books and articles like *Songs of Nepal: An Anthropology of Newār Folk songs and Hymns*, “*Newārigitimanjari*, Religious and Secular Poetry of *Newārs* of Kathmandu Valley”, “The Legend of Prince Vessantara (based on Vessantara *Jātaka*)” etc.

The present article “Nepal: The Survival of Indian *Buddhism* in a Himalayan Kingdom”, begins with the description of climate and surrounding of Kathmandu Valley. In the article he mentions two important religions- *Buddhism* and *Hinduism* which were introduced into Nepal valley from nearby India at a very early date and both these religions considered the valley a region of special religious significance. Leinhard highlights Nepal as birth place of the *Buddha* and narrates a *Buddhist* legend about origin of Kathmandu Valley with the arrival of the *Bodhisattva Manjuśrī* from the east.

According to Leinhard, two dominant groups- *Newārs* and *Gurkhās* inhabited the valley. Leinhard describes *Newārs*, the inhabitants of the valley as strongly indianized Mongols who migrated from the north or northeast and are predominantly *Buddhists*. He states that though *Newār* community is a minor group with population about half million, they gave the Nepal valley its special character for they have long been the cultural elite of the country. On the other hand, he mentions *Gurkhā* as originally pure Aryans coming from Rajasthān. He held the view that ancestors of *Gurkhā* brought *Hinduism* reinforced by *Brāhmanical* influence while they fled to Nepal because of *Muslim* onslaught in India. He also mentions about a rich *Newār* literature, mostly religious, narratives and didactic, which have so far been little explored.

Leinhard puts forth the view that religious syncretism between *Hinduism* and *Buddhism* is the characteristic of the Nepal valley and the dividing lines between

them can not be precisely defined. He explains that during initial period of *Malla* rulers (about 1200 to 1480 AD), *Newārs* delivered the intellectual life and culture of the country and this continued later too. According to him, Medieval Nepal can be called the Nepal of the *Newārs*. But, he also mentions that political power always laid in the hands of *Hindu* rulers who were not of *Newār* descent and who modeled their courts on India. He considers that Prithwi Nārāyan Shāha (1768 – 75 AD) began an era of attempts to hinduize the valley, which led at times to rigorous repression of the *Newārs*.

As most of the scholars did, Leinhard also corroborates the term *Nepalese Buddhism* to refer to *Buddhist* religion of heartland and centre of Nepal and to the particular form of *Buddhism* developed in the tiny Kathmandu valley. He reveals his opinion that *Buddhism* must have started during Aśoka time or around as there is direct connection between Aśoka and the valley.

He relates that the religious situation in the valley for a long time was similar to that of pre-Islamic India. There were many schools and sects of late *Buddhism* at work in Nepal and the country experienced a great and final influx of *Buddhist* forces in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries when Islam invaded northern India and *Buddhism* finally ceased on Indian soil. He alludes that the centre of Nepal now became a sanctuary for monks, scholars and artists from India, who had crucial effect on both the religions and artistic life of the *Buddhist Newārs*. *Buddhist* contact with India ceased. He corroborates that probably the growing isolation of *Buddhist Newār* communities which existed alongside a *Hindu* faith constantly strengthened and nourished by new stimuli that led to the peculiar development of the Nepalese form of *Buddhism*. He asserts that the chief characteristics of *Newār Buddhism* are on the one hand a strong blending with elements of *Hinduism*, especially of *Śaiva Tantra* and on the other hand the far reaching laicization of the monks and monasteries. Leinhard also gave a brief account of Hiuen Tsang's saying about Nepal, which mentioned that *Buddhist* and *Hindu* buildings stood side by side in Nepal. He opines that *Hinayāna* disappeared while *Vajrayāna* continued to prosper as it easily assimilated and was open to *Hindu* influences.

Lienhard states that present *Nepalese Buddhism* with unique *Sanḡha* organization of married house holder monks is in vogue from more than 1500 years after *Buddha's* period and apparently a huge change from that of *Buddha's* time.

Lienhard opines that this great change did not happen suddenly, but came about slowly, and did not clearly occur until after the isolation of Nepal from India. He reveals that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Patan still had about twenty five monasteries in which the monks, pledged to the older rule, and kept strictly to celibacy. He mentions that Hinduization exerted a lasting influence not only on the social structure of the Nepal valley but also on the *Buddhist* pantheon. *Buddhists* had to depend on the support of *Hindu* rulers and officials. He repeats his view that the growth of *Hinduism* in Nepal as completely conscious trend aiming at national prestige appears to have begun only with the era of the *Śāha* rulers. He mentions that schools of late *Buddhism* on Indian soil, especially in Bihār and Bengāl, which adjoin Nepal, had already borrowed many elements from *Hinduism*. He speculates that the decay of the old *Buddhist* monasteries in Nepal and their transformation into living quarters for whole families must be attributed less to the deteriorating financial position of the monasteries than to the development of the schools of *tantric Buddhism* which flourished in the Middle Ages.

He considers that hierarchical social structure based on caste system, imposed by the Jayasthitimalla (1382 – 95 AD), which is originally the characteristic of *Hinduism* developed in the course of time among the *Buddhists* of Kathmandu valley. Lienhard held the view that this process had begun long before the 15<sup>th</sup> century but it accelerated when more and more *Hindu* religious observances became absorbed into ritualistic *Vajrayāna*.

Lienhard notes that priestly classes are all the descendants of *Buddhist* monks who had married. *Vajrācāryas* are regarded as scholars and teaching priests while *Śākyas* are less learned and lower ranking priests. According to him, these statuses conform very closely to *Hindu* models. He called this the final and crucial phases of the gradual assimilation of *Nepalese Buddhism* to a *Hinduism*. He considers *Vajrācāryas* equivalent to *Brāhmins*. He notes some interesting similarities between *Vajrācārya* and *Brāhmins*. He describes *Vajrācārya* as functioning priest, having authority of a learned *Paṇḍit*, well versed in scriptures, faithful and erudite teacher. He was an adept in the *mantra* and *dhāraṇīs* (spells and incantations), the *tantric caryā* songs (esoteric mystical poetry), and many rituals, some public and some secret, as an expert and custodian of *Buddhist* scholarship and knowledge. They were not only *Bhikṣus* but also considered *gurus* as they have undergone higher initiations required for priests of a higher order. He relates a *Brāhmin*

custom with *Vajrācārya* and *Bhikṣus* in that they all led an ordinary family life in adulthood, and their *Buddhist* education, like the priesthood, was handed down mainly on a hereditary basis.

He compares that in *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna*, admission into monastic order (lower ordination) and the full ordination of monks were predominantly occasions within monastic community, the rites carried out for *Vajrācāryas* and *Bhikṣus* in Nepal seem to have become a part of life cycle ceremonies which again are copied from *Hindu* models. He regards Initial ordination (*Pravajyā*) of the Nepalese *Buddhist* as the counterpart of the *Hindu* initiation. He notes that the boy after having ordained as a monk, abandons the life of a monk after four days and, after having adopted the career of a layman, returns for the rest of his life to the bosom of his family. Thus, he finds the consecration of a *Bhikṣu* is confined to this ritual. He states that consecration of monks in Nepal was greatly influenced by *Śaiva tantrism*, which has a similar ceremony modeled on the Indian consecration of kings. He mentions that ancient royal symbolism survived in the ritual of the *Buddhist Newārs*; the head-dress and regalia of officiating *Vajrācārya* often made him look like an Indian king. He says that the caste system has done much to keep the way of life and the traditions of the lay-monks of *Newārs*. But he remarks that recently both proficiency of the priests, and the cultivation of the various arts and sciences which was once the proud responsibility of many Nepalese monasteries, have unfortunately suffered a rapid decline.

Leinhard has described *Vihāra* art and architecture mentioning the components of *Vihāra* in the *Chapter* with heading 'Inside the *Vihāra*'. He states that there were *Vihāras* in Kathmandu Valley at least as far back as the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, but only a very few survive from before the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He mentions that most of the *Vihāras* are of later date, after celibacy had long been abandoned. He corroborates that the *Kumārī* cult of *Newār Buddhists* has root in *Hindu Śaiva* culture as *Kumārī* is identified with one of the eight mother goddesses of *Hindu*.

It is assumed that in the transitional period celibate monks lived in certain *Vihāras* while married monks lived in others. At the end of the article he discussed the occupation of *Buddhist* monks (*Vajrācārya* and *Śākya*), cause of their dispersal from the monasteries, and functions carried out in many Nepalese monasteries which are still active centres of *Newār* religious life. Lienhard feels a custom of

looking after the chief deities with great care in the various *Buddhist* shrines as borrowed from *Hinduism*. He finds the blurring of the dividing line between *Buddhism* and *Hinduism* in the worship of a number of deities including those of *Matsyendranātha*. According to him, some *Buddhist* customs have been taken directly from *Hinduism*, and some have been assembled by a process of syncretism. He notes that though *Hindu* and *Buddhist* deities lie together side by side and two great religions interact each other, life in the communities of the *Newār Vihāras* has remained intrinsically and distinctly *Buddhist*.

2.9 Alexander von Rospatt. “**The Survival of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in Nepal – A Fresh Appraisal**”: in *Buddhismus im Geschichte und Gegenwart* 5. Hamburg: Universität Hamburg (Weiterbildendes Studium), 2002, S. 168 -189.

Prof. Dr. Alexander von Rospatt, currently head of the Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies at University of California, Berkley, and U.S.A is better known as the scholar of New Generation on *Newār Buddhism*, the only Indic *Mahāyāna* tradition that continues to persist in its original South Asian setting in Kathmandu Valley right to the present. He also has specialized in the doctrinal history of Indian *Buddhism*. His first book sets forth the development and early history of the *Buddhist* doctrine of momentariness, which established him as a scholar on *Buddhist* studies. He has done laborious research work on periodic renovations of the *Svayambhū* Stupa of Kathmandu. After several years of fieldwork in Nepal and based on *Newār* manuscripts, he reconstructs the ritual history of these renovations and their social contexts. He is currently engaged in research project on life cycle rituals of old age among the *Newārs*. Besides, there are several thought provoking research articles to his credit.

Alexander von Rospatt has described the geographical location of Kathmandu Valley as a natural fortress in the beginning of this research article, and mentions that due to much less conflicts in the valley protected by a circle of high mountains and stable environment, a comparatively prosperous civilization with a diversified urban culture could develop. Hence the culture and civilization of the *Newārs*, the inhabitants of the valley did not undergo the deep social, religious, political and cultural changes that went along with *Muslim* and British rule in Northern India.

As a consequence, he asserts that forms of religious practice like *tantric Mahāyāna Buddhism* which have, in their original South Asian setting with *Sanskrit* as sacred language, only survived uninterruptedly in Nepal. While describing its inhabitants, the *Newārs* who seem to have populated the valley at least 2000 years, he regards them as a mix of central Asian, Himalayan, and North Indian people. He considers them as the representatives of south Asian religion and culture who however, resisted outright assimilation and adopted pan-India *Sanskritic* tradition without abandoning their own heritage. Though the amalgamation of local and pan-Indian traditions is characteristic for much of the subcontinent, he wonders, how alive autochthonous beliefs and practices remain among the *Newārs* even to this day.

Rospatt has discussed the probable history of *Buddhism* in Nepal and speculates that *Buddhism* must have rooted in Nepal around 5<sup>th</sup> century onward. In the lack of testimony, he did not regard other two views that (1) *Buddhism* could have introduced during *Buddha*' time or (2) in Aśoka time, as true. However, regarding the statement of Hiuen Tsang, the great Chinese traveler of 7<sup>th</sup> century that Nepal was a flourishing *Buddhist* centre with some 2000 monks, he opines these monks must have belonged to the fold of Northern Indian *Buddhism*.

*Buddhism* in Nepal developed after the severance of ties with India with very little exposure to other *Buddhist* traditions in 14<sup>th</sup> century. Instead, it was strongly influenced by *Hindu* traditions mainly *tantric Śaivism* and *Śaktism*. He dismisses the probability of Tibetan influence in *Newār Buddhism* due to difference in language and culture though Tibet thrived in close vicinity of Nepal.

Significance of *Newār Buddhism*, as he states, lies in production of fine *Buddhist* arts and architecture, a corpus of devotional *Mahāyāna* literature, and sizeable ritual literature. However, he marked conspicuous absence of famed scholars and renowned practitioners who could contribute to *Buddhist* doctrine and learning. He admired *Newār Buddhists* in having several *Mahāyāna sūtras* of Indian origin, such as the *Kārandavyūha* radically reworked in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, so as to adjust them to a Nepalese setting and relocate the main action there. He also credits *Newār Buddhism* to have brought out another important text, *Svayambhū Purāṇa* as a part of literary endeavour. He reveals that the literary production outlined here reflects that *Newār Buddhism* is a tradition essentially concerned with the performance of rituals and devotional practices.

He finds that Paradoxical laicization of the monkhood and its complete accommodation to the caste system has been the main topic of the foreign writers write about. He mentions that though assuming monkhood only ritually for a few days, *Newār Buddhists* (*Vajrācārya* and *Śākya*) maintain their monastic identity even after disrobing. Thus he stressed *Newār Buddhism* is not a “*Buddhism* without monks”, as Michael Allen and more recently Siegfried Lienhard have it, but a *Buddhism* with monks who have turned householders without really giving up their identity as monks. He enumerates several reasons for this account.

He envisages that without sense of identity of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* as *Buddhist* monks of kinds and without the cults and traditions they perpetuate, *Newār Buddhism* would have most likely been absorbed into the *Hindu* fold, as it happened in Northern India. For lay castes without a monastic connection *Buddhism* is not firmly anchored and institutionalized enough to guarantee a lasting sense of distinctness from the *Hindu* surrounding. He took *Newār Buddhism* as an example of the fact that the institution of monkhood and monasticism can even without vocational, celibate monks be of such pivotal importance showing how vital it is for the integrity and survival of *Buddhist* societies. He mentions *Vajrācārya*, *Śākya*, and also *Udās* possessing distinct *Buddhist* identity in Nepal.

He criticized the tendency of scholars and other casual observers who view *Newār Buddhism* as a degenerate form of *Buddhism*, corrupted by assimilation to *Hinduism* pointing to the laicization of monkhood, the restriction of access to initiations on the basis of caste, to the institution of hereditary priesthood and the related observance of rites of passage and *sṛāddha* rituals that are taken over from the *Hindu* tradition, to the prevalent practice of animal sacrifice etc. He opined that this kind of reasoning is based on the presupposition that these phenomena developed after the severance of ties with *Buddhist* Indians when Nepalese *Buddhist* were exposed without protection to the *Hindu* culture of the valley. Thus he assumes some of the phenomena regarded as *Newār* degenerations seem to have their roots already in Indian developments. According to him, reference may, for instance, be made to the accommodation of the *Saṅgha* to the caste system in Srilanka or the performance of *Hindu* style rites of passage in the *Kriyā Saṁgraha*, a text which was compiled well before *Buddhism* vanished in India. Moreover, the institution of married householder monks was prevalent in Nepal when *Buddhism*

was still flourishing in India. Thus, he cited reference of the Tibetan monk Dharmaswamin, who came to Nepal in 1226 and stayed there for eight years, that there were monasteries “with and without monks” specifying that only few monasteries had monks, that is presumably to say, had celibate monks who did not disrobe in order to become married householders. He held the view that the complete disappearance of celibate monkhood in Nepal is a local development that eventually occurred after *Buddhism* vanished in India. However, the decline of celibate monkhood in *Newār Buddhism* is not a unique case, but can be compared to similar developments in East Asian *Mahāyāna* countries.

Rospatt notes that *Newār* achievements in the ritual and *tantric* sphere are readily disregarded, because scholars have tended to adopt a protestant tainted stance, judging *Buddhist* traditions in the light of the teachings found in the oldest strata of the canon. He pointed out that the ritual and *tantric* traditions preserved by *Newār Buddhism* have been very little studied and hence are little known and thus easily ignored. He added that scholars have also tended to overlook the rich literary heritage of *Newār Buddhism*.

Rospatt regards previous studies of *Newār Buddhism* not only flawed by a lack of knowledge but also more fundamentally, by viewing the tradition exclusively in terms of Indian *Buddhism* because he puts forth the view that in order to arrive at a understanding of *Newār Buddhism* it is helpful to study the tradition not only in the light of preconceived notions of what *Buddhism* essentially is, but also to adopt the perspective of the tradition itself.

He described *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, a local indigenous text to have given unique definite shape to *Newār Buddhism*. He asserts that various recensions of different length, both in *Saṅskṛit* and *Newārī* language, of this text which, despite its title, is *Mahāyāna sūtra*. He also admires the text to have relocated the important *Buddhist* sites within Nepal establishing the Nepal valley as the sacred divine place. In his view the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* transforms Nepal into a *Buddha* field (*Buddhakṣetra*), a kind of *Sukhāvati Bhūvan*, or a blessed country (*punyaabhūmi*), particularly favourable for the practice of *Buddhism*, or a paradisaal realm where a particular *Buddha* manifests himself to the *Bodhisattva* reborn there, and where these *Bodhisattvas* practice and realize the *Buddha*’s teachings without encountering any obstacles and hardship. He affirms *Newār* belief that the valley’s blessedness not



only account for its sheer beauty, its moderate climate, plentiful agricultural output, but also marvelous temples, shrines, monasteries and palaces embellishing the towns and countryside and the ample opportunity for the direct communion with the deities.

Rospatt has given a short history of origin of *Svayambhū* stupa and *Nepal-maṇḍala* based on the *Svayambhū Purāṇa*. According to him the self arisen crystalline stupa which the text mentioned is qualified as the home of the *Jinas* (*Jinālaya*), as the ontological basis of the five *Tathāgatas*. The qualifications are in accordance with the general conception of stupas in *Vajrayāna* tradition which established the stupa not only as the cultic centre of *Newār Buddhism*, but also the ontological centre of *Buddhism* at large. He mentions that the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* serves to relocate the centre of *Buddhism* away from its homeland in India right into the heart of Kathmandu Valley by featuring referential events of pilgrimage visit of *Śākyamuni Buddha* and Aśoka to pay veneration to the *Svayambhū caitya*. He held the view that loss of importance of the historical *Buddha* in *Mahāyāna* literature is very much due to the minor role attributed to *Śākyamuni* in the texts like the *Svayambhū Purāṇa*. He also alludes that the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* went on relating the origins of other sacred sites in the valley not only creating a sacred landscape but also propagated the cult and worship of these sites in the valley. This accords with a very prominent feature of *Newār Buddhism*, the devotional worship of *Buddhist* deities. He held the view that the *purāṇa* also has provided *tantric* dimension of *Newār Buddhism* by linking the valley with the *maṇḍala* of *Cakrasamvara*, by raising the issue of Śāntikarācārya and dealing with the *Nāmasangiti*, an early *tantric* text along with linkage to the *Dharmadhātuvagisvara-maṇḍala* and *Svayambhū*. He points out perspectives in *Svayambhū Purāṇa* not envisaging *Buddhism* as soteriology but meeting worldly means, maintaining the ideal of *Bodhisattva* instead of the celibate monk.

He assumes it reasonable that renunciatory monkhood gave way to the institution for hereditary monks who disrobe only three days after their ordination in order to become ordinary, married householders for the rest of their live. *Newār Buddhists*, he mentions, leave little scope for individualism and the aspiration to transcend society and pursue an existence outside its framework. The practice of *Buddhism* is like most other activities pursued collectively within the framework of society. Hence, it was but natural to integrate the institution of monkhood into society for if

there can be liberation in *Newār Buddhism* it can, in a sense, only be within, not outside society. He extrapolates that collective practice of *Buddhism* by *Newārs* drawing the great sense of satisfaction and joy accounts for the outstanding vitality that *Newār Buddhism* has preserved to this day.

However, he reminds that the concept of emancipation is not entirely absent in *Newār Buddhism* as the esoteric forms of higher *tantric* practice are soteriological in nature. He points out to the fact that *Newār Buddhism* is practiced within society, and very much as part of it, and that as a consequence there is only as much scope for *Buddhism*'s soteriological dimension as this very close-knit society allows for. He elaborates *Newār Buddhism* does not see itself in the light of pure *Buddhist* teaching. Rather, it views in the light of the *Mahāyāna*, and more particularly of the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* and related indigenous literature, which after all is taken to render the words of the *Buddha*. He suggest to assume this emic perspective rather than clinging to the earlier form of *Buddhism*, *Newār Buddhism* emerges as an intact tradition, and as an example bearing out how adaptable a religion *Buddhism* proved to be over the vast expanse of space and time.

In the last fifty years *Newār Buddhism* has been challenged by a new development, namely the introduction of monastic *Theravāda Buddhism*. Howsoever, he believes that the *Svayambhū Purāṇa* can serve as a key for a more adequate understanding of *Newār Buddhism*, correcting many of the misconceptions that have flowed our understanding of this tradition.

## 2.10 Additional Literature review

As per the suggestion of the internal examiner of Dean's Office, Faculty of Humanities and Social Science, following four literature review are included additionally. Three among four of the works reviewed belong to the authorship of Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, therefore they are placed together in one section while the last one is penned by Dr. Dina Bangdel.

Naresh Man Bajracharya, after having his M.A, M.Phil and PhD in Buddhist Studies from University of Delhi, is now professor at Central Department of

Buddhist Studies, Tribhuvan University. In the beginning, he worked as an instructor of Buddhist ritualistic training at Balmiki Vidhyāpith, Nepal *Saṁskrit* University. He is associated with several Buddhist organizations, some of which he founded himself. Author to a dozen of books, he has participated and presented papers in national and international seminars. At present he is engaged in historic movement of construction of Nepalese *Vajrayāna* monastery in Lumbini, the birth place of the Buddha. Among several literary works of Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, a text and two seminar papers are chosen for review here. They are

1. *History of Buddhism in Nepal* (465 BC to 1199 AD), (Delhi: Eastern Book Linker, 1998) – a book
2. ‘Nepalko Boudha Dharma va Paramparāmā Nepal-Maṇḍala’ in *A Conference on the Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandal-1998, A Report*, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 1998), Pp. 113-128 – a research seminar paper presented at seminar International Conference on Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandal organized by Lotus Research Centre, 1998,
3. ‘Buddhist Practice in Nepal Mandala Today with Special Reference to Nepalese *Buddhism*’ in Dr. Jalindar Bhosale, Dr. Monika Vaidya and Dr. Amol Vidhya Sagar (Ed.), *Buddhism: Past and Present*, (Pune: Department of History, Abasaheb Garware College, 2011), Pp. 7-21 – A seminar paper presented at Pune in 2011

#### 2.10.1 Naresh Man Bajracharya, *Buddhism in Nepal*, (Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1998)

There are several books written about *Buddhism* in Nepal. Among them the one penned by Naresh Man Bajracharya is taken as the most comprehensive one. The book was written wholly from historical stand point covering Buddhist history in Nepal from 465 BC to 1199 AD concerning pre-history to *Lichchavī* period which was described as ancient period in the book. The author justifies his text as a research work presenting chronological order of books written on history of *Buddhism* in Nepal. Divided into six chapters, the book opens with first chapter dealing in *Buddhism* during *Kirāt* period. The author discusses on possible visit of the Buddha to Nepal valley and several confirmed visit to Kapilvastu, account on

Ramgram Stupa and Aśokan Pillar of Niglihawā, Lumbini and Gotihawā confirming Emperor Aśoka's visit to Kapilvastu. Also included in the chapter is discussion on alleged visit of Aśoka to Nepal valley. The author considers that impression of Aśoka's visit to Nepal valley was so intense that there are numerous stupas/*caitya* that are regarded as *Aśokan Caityas*.

The second chapter included account on *Buddhism* in Nepal during *Lichchavī* period from Vrsdeva to Vijayakamadeva (1129 – 1199)'s time but highlighted only nine *Lichchavī* rulers whose names were mentioned as sub heading titles. Similarly, six prominent *vihāras* of *Lichchavī* period have been given importance while a list of 34 *vihāras* is given in tabulated form.

Comparatively a short chapter Four tries to trace out Buddhist sects or schools of *Lichchavī* period. The author indicated prevalence of *Mahāsaṃghika* sect, *Bhikṣu Saṅgha*, *Mahāyāni Bhikṣuni Saṅgha*, *Vajrayāna* school, *Avalokiteśvara* cult, *sākyabhikṣu Saṅgha* during *Lichchavī* period. The information provided is scanty as compared to chapter title.

Longest among all, chapter Five was devoted to Nepalese Buddhist scholars like Buddhabhadra, Silamanju etc including more than two dozen scholars of *Lichchavī* period. The author hints at the presence of sound Buddhist scholarship during ancient period by introducing some prominent Nepalese Buddhist scholars. But, the information is very short in most cases. However, it opens door for further research.

Similarly, the author includes in the chapter six a brief introduction of nearly three dozen Tibetan scholars who visited Nepal and this is an ample information proving that Nepal was popular destination for Tibetan Buddhists for learning *Buddhism*.

2.10.2 Naresh Man Bajracharya, “Nepalko Boudha Dharma va Paramparāmā Nepal-*Maṇḍala*” in *A Conference on the Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandal-1998, A Report*, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 1998), Pp. 113-128 – a research seminar paper presented at seminar International Conference on Buddhist Culture organized by Lotus Research Centre 1998.

In the beginning of the article, Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, the author mentions about etymological meaning of the word Nepal that has been presented differently by different scholars analyzing the letter of the word.

The author cites occurrence of the Nepal in Buddhist texts like *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu* in which Nepal is mentioned as *Naival*, and *Manjuśrī Mūlakalpa* and *Vicitrakarṇikāvadāna*. Evaluating the date of compilation of two former texts, *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu* and *Manjuśrī Mūlakalpa* he assumes *Naiwal* to be the earlier form of Nepal. He further indicates the citation of *Nepal-maṇḍala* in *Svayambhūpurāṇa* and *Lichchavī* inscriptions.

The author describes the meaning of *maṇḍala* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* as the political boundary of the country or the religious boundary. In the paper he tries to analyze possible religious boundary of *Nepal-maṇḍala* from Buddhist view point which was mandated by the indigenous Buddhist tradition of Nepal. *Nepal-maṇḍala* is shown to have 24 major *pīṭha* (power places or religious sites) where *vajrācārya gurus* and *śākya* pay visit and practice *samādhiyoga*. This practice is called *Pūrvasevā* or *Pīṭhasevā* and is still observed in Kathmandu valley. The author shows distribution of 24 *pīṭhas* with names in diagrammatic circular form to give idea how it makes *maṇḍala* which became *Nepal-maṇḍala*. *Maṇḍala* layout is constructed within 3 successive layers of 3 circles named (i) *Citta cakṛa* (mind circle) (ii) *Vāk cakṛa* (Speech circle) and (iii) *Kāya cakṛa* (Body circle).

The author states that *Maṇḍala* has paramount importance in *Vajrayāna* and without knowing its concept, no one can understand *Vajrayāna*. *Maṇḍala* and *Vajrayāna* are complimentary to one another.

The author puts forth the view that basis of layout of *Nepal-maṇḍala* could most probably be any one or all the available major *Vajrayāna maṇḍala* like *Cakrasaṃvara-maṇḍala*, or *Shree-Hevajra-nairatma-maṇḍala* or *Mahāsaṃvara-*

*maṇḍala* or *Dharmadhātu-maṇḍala* etc. He opines that an efficient *ācārya* (*vajrācārya*) could visualize *Nepal-maṇḍala* as any one of the *Vajrayana maṇḍala*. Among these *maṇḍalas*, the author describes *Cakrasaṃvara-maṇḍala* with figurative illustration and compares it with layout of *Nepal-maṇḍala* laid out according 24 *Pīṭha*.

The author assumes that within *Nepal-maṇḍala* are *Lalitpur-maṇḍala*, *Bhaktapur-maṇḍala* and *Madhyapur-maṇḍala* (Thimi). Still *Vajrācāryas* and *Sākyas* of Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Madhyapur offer service to separate 8 *Pīṭhas* which lie in their respective territory. The author reveals that a *vajrācārya* engaged in *Bodhisattvacaryā* always constructs at least a circle “*maṇḍala*” made up of 8 places or locations wherever he enters and settles forming *Saṅgha* building Buddhist *vihāra* according to *Vajradhātu-maṇḍala*. Finally, the author also tries to relate *Nepal-maṇḍala* with *Prithwī-maṇḍala*. It is obvious that through this article, the author made effort justifiably to describe that concept of *Nepal-maṇḍala* was based upon buddhistic view specially *Vajrayānic* way.

2.10.3 Naresh Man Bajracharya, ‘Buddhist Practice in Nepal Mandala Today with Special Reference to Nepalese *Buddhism*’ in Dr. Jalindar Bhosale, Dr. Monika Vaidya and Dr. Amol Vidhya Sagar (Ed.), *Buddhism: Past and Present*, (Pune: Department of History, Abasaheb Garware College, 2011), Pp.7-21

It is another seminar paper by Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya presented at Pune in 2011. The paper was published along with other papers presented at the seminar, in the book form entitled *Buddhism: Past and Present* edited by Dr. Jalindar Bhosale, Dr. Monika Vaidya and Dr. Amol Vidhya Sagar. The paper begins with the quotation of the renowned French historian, Sylvian Levi mentioning that *Newār* Buddhists have much to teach about the history of *Buddhism* in south Asia as they are the last remaining south Asian *Mahāyāna* Buddhists. After a short description of *Newār* community divided into two religious faith, *Hinduism* and *Buddhism*, the author stressed upon religious harmony and peace exhibited by them.

It is mentioned in the article that *Newār* Buddhist tradition revealed to outside world by the early British diplomat, Brian H. Hodgson and affirmed as a singularly surviving tradition in south Asia in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century has preserved a vast store

of *Sanskrit* Buddhist manuscripts, arts in metal, wood and stone and ritual practices that were once practiced in India.

Mentioning about three types of *Buddhism* 1. Tibetan *Buddhism* 2. *Theravāda Buddhism* and 3. *Newār Buddhism* prevalent in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, the author clarifies that *Newār Buddhism* meant Nepalese *Buddhism* which took present form after having undergone several changes adding uniqueness. The paper tries to highlight several aspects of its monasticism, major ritual practice etc and draw attention to it in the modern Buddhist world.

After dealing in some major points regarding legendary and historical background of Nepalese *Buddhism* the author asserts that the ancient history of Nepal comes to life in the *Lichhavi* inscription (440 AD – 879 AD ). This account included visit of previous Buddhas, visit of Ananda, the chief disciple of the Buddha and emperor Ashok, the great Buddhist follower to *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The author also mentions that *Buddhism* flourished well during *Lichhavi* period and by 1300 *Nepal-maṇḍala* was a center for Buddhist learning for Tibetans.

The author points out that during medieval history of Nepal (1200 to 1769 CE) Nepalese Buddhist tradition continued to evolve and grow with strong exertion by *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. He also indicated Tibetan contribution. The author speculates that Buddhist masters have made the best of prevailing situation adapting *Mahāyāna* principle and *Vajrayāna* practices to create rituals that conformed to Brahmanical tradition when influence of later grew. He mentions that availability of hundreds of rituals is still a characteristic of Nepalese *Buddhism*.

The author considers Shah rule in modern Nepal (1769 CE – present day) not favorable for *Buddhism*. Public awareness grew in present situation and they were displeased with some wrong practices which helped reformist *Theravādins* grew in Modern Nepal. *Newār* Buddhist community became less conservative in regard to cast ideology and more open to new interpretation of the dharma.

Describing various aspects of Nepalese *Buddhism* and Monasticism the author mentions that there are more than 300 monasteries or *vihārs* which are titled *Mahā vihārs*, categorized into *Mū Bāhā*, *Bāhā* and *Bahi* each having two names. Similarly, he discusses about monastic order composed of *Śākya* and *Vajrācāryas*,

their *saṅgha* formation, marriage, and religious hierarchy. Under the heading major monastic activities, the author alludes to Buddhist ordination, *ācārya* initiation, other initiations and daily rituals carried out in monasteries. Under Buddhist community the author mentions about Lay Buddhist community comprised of several cast communities. The author mentions that among the *saṅgha* members only *Vajrācāryas* serve as family priest.

Likewise, the author briefly deals in major Buddhist practices under several sub-headings like Ritual for passage of life, visiting *Vihārs* and temples, Pilgrimage visit, *Vrata*, *Caitya* establishment, *Sapta Vidhānuttar pūjā*, *Hārati pūjā*, *Homa pūjā*, and *Sūtra pāṭha*. The author also mentioned about buddhist festivals of *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

The author considers that it is due to Buddhist theory of co-existence, patience, skillful means etc that *Buddhism* thrived well in *Nepal-maṇḍala* even when most of the kings were strong believer of Hinduism. Buddhist did not disobey casteism policy when it was implemented as the law and order of the country, they followed *Buddhism* within cast structure. The author mentions the ultimate goal of Nepalese *Buddhism* as seeking salvation (*Samyak Sambodhi*) of all living beings.

Presenting current situation of Nepalese *Buddhism* in Modern Nepal, Naresh Man Bajracharya, the author puts forth the view that strategic plan and action are needed to preserve Nepalese *Buddhism* from being extinct. And he further adds that though sole responsibility of preservation goes to Government of Nepal, Buddhist academicians and Buddhist world also need to feel responsibility for Nepalese *Buddhism* is their only living original Buddhist *Saṅskrit Mahāyāna Vajrayāna* tradition in the world.



2.10.4 Dina Bangdel, ‘Vajrayāna Masters and Socio-religious Influence: Revitalization and Practice in contemporary *Newār Buddhism*’ in Hoedang and Esoteric Buddhism, The International Conference of Korea-Srilanka, Mongolia, Nepal, Pp. 536-554

The article ‘Vajrayāna Masters and Socio-religious Influence: Revitalization and Practice in contemporary *Newār Buddhism*’ by Dina Bangdel, Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, USA was presented as seminar paper during Korea-Nepal Buddhist Seminar on the theme “Nepalese Esoteric *Buddhism* and *Sadkṣeri Mantra* Belief” dated Nov. 24, 2009, organized jointly by Central Department of Buddhist Studies, T.U. Nepal, Hoedang Studies, Jingak Buddhist Order, S. Korea, JGO Nepal. The article was published from Korea in the book of compilation of seminar papers.

In the introductory paragraph, the author Dr. Dina Bangdel describes Nepal to have been historically a vital centre of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* which served as very center-pot for the transmission of tantric *Buddhism* between north east India and Tibet. She considers Nepal as equally important Buddhist centre like Nālandā, Vikramsila, and Odantapuri. In the article two buddhist masters namely Vanratna (1384-1468 AD) – the renowned Indian *paṇḍit* who resided in Nepal till his death and *Paṇḍit* Badri Ratna Bajracharya of current period have been highlighted along with contemporary scholars. The author cited Vanratna from the famous inscribed painting with is now in possession with the Los Angeles county Museum of Art, USA. She tries to present the painting as a visual evidence to prove Kathmandu valley’s importance as a vital continuity of *Vajrayāna Buddhism*, after the decline of *Buddhism* in India in 13<sup>th</sup> century CE. She mentions a short but important biography of Vanratna and his activities in Nepal along with his meeting with *Mahā Siddhā* Luipā, Śabari and his teacher Buddhaghosha, his bestowment of initiation of *Kalchakra* on *Newār* Buddhist master Vibhutichandra. Citing quotation from Blue Annal, the author pointed out that Buddhist environment of Nepal was much better than that of Tibet during 15<sup>th</sup> century and that attracted Vanratna to reside in Kathmandu. The extensive biography of Vanratna clearly indicates that Kathmandu valley and the *Newār* Buddhist tradition were already flourishing as a center of *Vajrayāna* practice by 15<sup>th</sup> century. The author assumes that power shift to *Shāh* dynasty beginning in 1768 until 1950 proved to be difficult period for *Newār* Buddhists.

*Paṇḍit* Badri Ratna Bajracharya (b.1927) is featured as one of the leading Buddhist master of contemporary *Newār* Buddhist community in the modern period. He is credited to have renewed the interest of lay devotees and fellow practitioners through his relentless traditional activities fortified by his prolific writing, story telling techniques, proficiency in *Saṅskrit* language, expertise in rituals etc. His contribution to revitalization of *Newār Buddhism* has also been classified into public teachings for lay community, large scale tantric initiations and reforms in the life cycle rituals. Establishment of *Jina Saṅgha Vihār* at *Vairocan Tirtha*, *Svayambhū* foothill and performing *pravajyā* (Buddhist ordination) for those who did not technically belonged to any *bāhā* or *bahi Saṅgha* being cross breed of spring of monastics have been considered as the most commendable reformative deeds of Badriratna though he is regarded as a conservative Buddhist practitioner. Otherwise, there is a custom of conferring *pravajyā* to only pure breed or the descendent from monastic families belonging to any of the existing *bāhā* or *bahi Saṅgha*. While mentioning about current *Newār* Buddhist revitalization the author keeps expectation from Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya, the principal disciple of Pt. Badriratna who followed footsteps of his master being active in revitalizing *Newār Buddhism* in the area of public teaching, rituals, meditation and initiations. His conduction of public initiation on the *Sadkṣarī lokaśwor* in May 2005, that drew mass initiates over 600 is mentioned as most significant activity. The empowerment of *Sadkṣerī lokaśwor* is known as the most fundamental practice of developing *Bodhicitta* (Awaken mind). The author describes in short about the event. The author recalls how the duo i.e. Pt. Badriratna and Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya performed elaborate *Sapta-vidhānuttara pūjā* and *Vajradhātu* initiation at Los Angeles County Museum of Art where rituals, *rajamaṇḍal* display and dance were performed.

The author applauded mobilization of younger generation particularly from Patan, Bhaktapur, and Kirtipur by Dr. Naresh Man Bajracharya for revitalization of the Dharma, his establishment of the *Nepal Paramparāgata Boudha Dharma Saṅgha* in four different districts of Kathmandu valley to carry on traditional buddhist activities. A list of new Buddhist priests is also given. Finally, She concludes that *Vajrayāna* Buddhist community is slowly undergoing revitalization and that now Buddhist *Saṅgha* is witnessing a new self-consciousness as guardians of their important historical and religious heritage.

## CHAPTER III

### Concept of Monasticism in Religious Practice

Monasticism<sup>45</sup> is an institutionalized religious movement where members are bound by vows to an ascetic life of prayer, meditation, or good works. The word **Monasticism** originated in early Christian history and is derived from Greek *monos*, or Latin *monachus* meaning dwelling single or alone or a solitary person.<sup>46</sup> In '*Encyclopedia of Monasticism*<sup>47</sup>' it is defined as a single minded commitment to religious life conducted apart from the surrounding society and following a rule that usually involves emulating or obeying a founder. It denotes to the religious practice in which one renounces worldly pursuits in order to fully devote one's life to spiritual work. It usually refers to the way of life-communitarian or solitary-adopted by those individuals, male or female, who have elected to pursue an ideal of perfection or a higher level of religious experience through leaving the world. Therefore, a monastic may be a *yogi* (hermit), a wandering ascetic or simply one who is not cenobite and thus embraces eremitic and peripatetic life styles.<sup>48</sup> Monastic orders historically have been organized around a rule or a teacher, the activities of the members being closely regulated in accordance with the rule adopted. The practice is ancient as history of monasticism is considered as old as religion itself, having existed in Indian subcontinent almost 10 centuries before Christ. It can be found in some forms among most developed religions: *Buddhism*, *Christianity*, *Hinduism*, *Jainism*, *Taoism*, and the *Sufi* branch of *Islam*, though the expressions differ considerably. Those pursuing a monastic life are usually called *monks* or *brethren* (brothers) if male, and *nuns* or *sisters* if female. Both monks and nuns are also called *monastics*. The disciplinary regulations for monks and nuns are intended to create a life that is simple and focused, rather than one of deprivation or severe asceticism. They are expected to live with a minimum of possessions,

---

<sup>45</sup> Encyclopedia Britanica, *Britanica Ready Reference Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7 (New Delhi: Encyclopedia Britanica (India) Pvt. Ltd. And Impulse Marketing, 2005), P. 8

<sup>46</sup> (a) [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/info:main\\_page](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/info:main_page), Retrieved 2009.8.5

(b) Shankar Thapa, *Buddhist Monasticism in Theory and Practice*, (Kathmandu: Walden Book House, 1995), P. 11.

<sup>47</sup> William M. Johnston(ed.), *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, (Chicago, Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000), P. 1

<sup>48</sup> *The Encyclopaedia Britanica*, Vol. 12, (Chicago: Helen Hemingway Benton, 1978), P. 325.

which were to be voluntarily provided by the lay community. Lay followers also provided the daily food that monks required, and provided shelter for monks when they were needed. Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary, has rightly defined monasticism as ‘the way of life of monks in monasteries’.<sup>49</sup>

Technically, monasticism embraces both the life of the hermit, characterized by varying degrees of extreme solitude, and the life of the cenobite, that is, the monk living in a community offering a limited amount of solitude. It usually entails Asceticism, or the practice of disciplined self-denial. During the early history of *Buddhist* monasticism, *Buddhism* existed as simply another sect in the community of wanderers (*parivrājakas*) practising Asceticism.<sup>50</sup> This asceticism may include fasting, silence, a prohibition against personal ownership, an acceptance of bodily discomfort etc. Almost it may include poverty, celibacy, and obedience to a spiritual leader. The soteriological goal of such practices is usually a more intense relationship with god, some type of personal enlightenment, or the service of god through prayer, meditation, or good works such as teaching or nursing. In the religion like *Buddhism* where the goal of life in monasticism is to realize true nature of the world or attainment of liberation (*Nirvāṇa*), monasticism is simply a way of life in preparation for or under religious vows. Each person must decide what lifestyle will best enable him or her to work efficiently and sincerely toward this goal. To some extent, each person's spiritual path will be different and is worked out in consultation with the Head of the Center. Pursuits are blended in a combination suitable to the person's temperament. Religiously, one tries in his life to work with concentration yet detachment; worship, work, and pray with devotion to god; study, discuss and contemplate the scriptures and affirm own true nature, and spend time each day in meditation.

Monastic routine consists mainly of liturgical work, meditation, and study (teaching/learning activities). It also includes household activities such as cooking and cleaning, maintenance, gardening, temple duties and rituals. Later, one becomes involved in lecturing, writing, editing and public outreach. It also

---

<sup>49</sup> A S Hornby, *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), P. 751

<sup>50</sup> Charles S. Prebish, “Early History of the Buddhist Order” in Charles S. Prebish (ed.), *Buddhism, a modern perspective*, (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1995), P.18

provides a service to the public by sharing the teachings of religious doctrines, and serving god through the many visitors who come.

Generally, four things are essential in monastic life. They are

- (i) devotion to higher ideals
- (ii) renunciation of ordinary enjoyment and sensate values
- (iii) a spirit of service
- (iv) an affinity and zeal for sharing

The primary motivation of monastic life should not be to escape something unpleasant. Rather, it should be to move into an atmosphere that is the most conducive to spiritual life. And it is not a path to avoid being busy. There is full opportunity to meditate and study on a regular basis, associate with other spiritual aspirants, and be involved in work that is meaningful.

It will be proper here to introduce briefly monasticism of some major religions of the world, except of *Buddhism* which will be dealt at length separately later under the heading 'Monasticism in *Buddhism*'.

### 3.1 Monasticism in *Christianity*

Monasticism in *Christianity* emerged as a way of life in the Egyptian deserts as early as the first century C.E. In the time of Christ, the ESSENES at Qumran were Jewish monks. In the Jewish and Christian tradition Elijah and Elisha are inspiring examples of divine hermits, and Judaism provides the earliest known order of monks in the Middle East - the Essenes.<sup>51</sup> It is likely that they first opt out of Jewish society in the 2nd century BC in protest against a secular leader, *Simon Maccabaeus*, becoming the high priest in the Temple. After 63 BC there was more than the rule of the Maccabees to fuel Essene disgust at the condition of the world. Judaea is under Roman rule, and the Essenes begin to place renewed faith in an old dream - the arrival of the *Messiah*. He is no longer to be a temporal ruler from the house of David, bringing in a superior form of government. By now he had become an apocalyptic figure, who would destroy this wicked world and lead the elect. This indicates to pre-Christian monasticism. Christian monasticism is a way of religious living that is being embraced as a vocation from God out of a desire to

---

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid>, Retrieved 2009.8.15

attain eternal life in his presence. It is also called the "counsels of perfection". Christian Monasticism is a practice that began to develop early in the history of the Christian Church, modeled upon scriptural examples and ideals, including those in the *Old Testament*, but not mandated as an institution in the scriptures.<sup>52</sup> Early Christian monasticism concentrates on individual asceticism and involves three key elements: poverty, chastity and obedience. All three were established on the basis of Christian faith.<sup>53</sup> Although the term 'Monachos', the root word for monasticism is a Christian creation, Monasticism was little known in *Christianity* until the end of the third century. Christian monasticism began distinctively in the deserts of Egypt and Syria in the 4th century AD.<sup>54</sup> Saint Anthony (251-356) the Great was connected with the first Egyptian hermits; Saint Pachomius (290- 346), with the first communities of cenobites in Egypt. Saint Basil the Great (fl. 379), bishop of Caesarea, placed monasticism in an urban context by introducing charitable service as a work discipline for eastern church and John Cassien (360-465) helped spread monasticism to western Europe.<sup>55</sup> Monastery of Saint Anthony, is the oldest Christian monastery in the world. The Benedictine order, founded by St. Benedict of Nursia (6th century), called for moderation of ascetic practice and established worship services at regular hours.<sup>56</sup> The organization of western monasticism is due primarily to Saint Benedict whose Benedictine rule<sup>57</sup> formed the basis of life in most monastic communities until the 12th century. Among the principal monastic orders that evolved in the Middle Ages were the Carthusians in the 11th century and the Cistercians in the 12th; the mendicant orders, or friars--Dominicans, Franciscans, and Carmellites--arose in the 13th century.<sup>58</sup> Monasticism has flourished both in the Roman Catholic church and in the Eastern Orthodox churches from earliest Christian times to the present, being reformed and renewed periodically by dynamic individuals with new emphases or departures from current practice. Although Protestantism rejected monasticism in the 16th century, the Anglican church since the 19th century has sponsored a number of monastic

---

<sup>52</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_monasticism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_monasticism), Retrieved 2009.8.15

<sup>53</sup> Marilyn J. Dunn, *The emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages*, (London: Blackwell Publishers, 2002) chs 1 and 5.

<sup>54</sup> (i) <http://www.religionfacts.com/Christianity/history/monasticism.htm>, Retrieved 2009.8.15

(ii) Encyclopedia Britanica, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 45), P. 8

<sup>55</sup> Encyclopedia Britanica, *Ibid*, P. 8

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>57</sup> Dunn, *Op.cit.*(f.n. 53), P. 114

<sup>58</sup> David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), Pp. 159- 227

orders. In its present-day form, Christian monasticism is often adapted to the cultures or settings where it is located. Therefore, there were strands within *Christianity* dating back to the time of the apostles that emphasized asceticism, celibacy, poverty or moral perfection. Fasting was an accepted discipline in the early church. Early Christian monasticism aimed at withdrawal from the world preferring practice of bodily mortification which included celibacy, chastity, silence, poverty, fasting. Later on, it inclined to coenobitical form which attracted the nobility. The followers donated to build monasteries that served as the centre of learning.

The words: *monk*, *monastery*, and *monasticism* do not appear in the Bible. The idea of Christian monks historically is based on the Gospel accounts of the lives of *Jesus Christ* and the *Apostles* (and also influenced by the lives of the *Old Testament Prophets*). Particularly, the lives of *Elijah* and *John the Baptist* were inspirational.<sup>59</sup> The ultimate inspiration, however, is the life of *Christ*. *Lord's* example is of a life wholly dedicated to God, bathed in prayer and Bible study, teaching, preaching, and including spiritual disciplines like *fasting* and *Scripture memorization*.

Around the 12th century, the Franciscan, Carmelite, Dominican, and Augustinian mendicant orders chose to live in city convents among the people instead of secluded in monasteries.

Today new expressions of Christian monasticism, many of which ecumenical, are developing in places such as the Bose Monastic Community in Italy, the Monastic Fraternities of Jerusalem throughout Europe, and the Taizé Community in France, in addition to the Evangelical Protestant New Monasticism movement.

### 3.2 Monasticism in *Hinduism*

*Hinduism*<sup>60</sup>, the earliest among the world's great religions, is also probably the first to involve a form of monasticism. The rejection of worldly goods and desires,

---

<sup>59</sup> [http://www.prayerfoundation.org/brief\\_history\\_of\\_Christian\\_monasticism.htm](http://www.prayerfoundation.org/brief_history_of_Christian_monasticism.htm), Retrieved 2009.8.20

<sup>60</sup> The word *Hinduism* is supposed to have been coined much later from *Sindhu* which turned into *Hindu*, used in aspects of people related to Indus Valley Civilization.

(i) Axel Michaels, *Hinduism, Past and Present*, (New Delhi: Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., 2004), P. 13

central to the *Hindu* concept of holiness, inclines devotees to conditions of poverty - among them the life of a hermit. *Vedic* textual data suggests that asceticism in India—in forms similar to that practiced by *sādhus* today- dates back to 1700 B.C. There is evidence that before about 600 BC some *Hindu* hermits live in groups at a place described as *āśramas*.<sup>61</sup> But they remained a collection of solitary holy men rather than a community of monks. They did not seem to have accepted any form of communal rule. In the period between 600BC to 200BC, there were hermits who lived in groups (*Āśram*) though they do not lead a strictly organized communal life.<sup>62</sup> In their quest to attain the spiritual goal of life, some *Hindus* choose the path of monasticism (*sanyāsa*). Monastics commit themselves to a life of simplicity, celibacy, detachment from worldly pursuits, and the contemplation of God.<sup>63</sup> They are also called *Yatin*. They observed strict ascetic rules and lived exclusively on alms.

Unlike *Buddhist* monasticism stressing upon middle way practice, *Hindu* monasticism is mostly a severe form of asceticism in which the ascetics tortures himself physically to please the god for attainment of salvation (*mokṣa*). *Hindu* asceticism<sup>64</sup> generally means celibacy, self mortification, wandering, begging, and a special diet.

Holy men and women have long played an important role in Indian culture and religious traditions. As a result, there are a variety of *Hindu* terms used to denote religious mendicants. The most famous terms are "*Yogis*" (those who practice *Yogā*), "*Gurus*" (those who dispel spiritual darkness), "*Sādhus*" (mendicants), "*Swāmis*" (Spiritual Masters), "*Ṛiṣis*" (Seers), "*Sannyāsīs*" (Renunciates) and *Bābās*. The number of these terms is a sign of the importance of holy men and women in Indian life even today. In *Hinduism*, the terms *Sādhu*, *Swāmi* and *Sannyāsī* refer to renunciates and spiritual masters, who left behind all material

---

(ii) Anthony Elenjittam, *Monasticism: Christian and Hindu Buddhist*, (Virginia: Brother Joseph for Aquinas Publication, The University of Virginia, 1969)

<sup>61</sup> <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid=Op.cit.> (f.n. 51)

<sup>62</sup> Encyclopedia Britanica, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 45), P. 8

<sup>63</sup> (i) Swami Bhaskarananda, *Essentials of Hinduism* (Viveka Press 1994) *Essentials of Hinduism, A Comprehensive Overview of the World's Oldest Religion*, (Seattle: Viveka Press 1994), P. 112,

(ii) <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monasticism>, Retrieved 2009.8.28

<sup>64</sup> Michael, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 60i), Pp. 315-316



attachments to live in forests, temples and caves all over India.<sup>65</sup> The word "*Sādhū*" is the general term for a *Hindu* ascetic who gives up the pursuit of the first three *Hindu* goals of life: *kāma* (pleasure), *artha* (wealth and power) and even *Dharma* (duty), to solely dedicate himself to achieving *mokṣa* (liberation) through meditation and contemplation of God. The title *Swāmi* literally means as "*owner of oneself*," denoting complete mastery over instinctive and lower urges. Many *yogis* and *gurus* (teachers) of the *Hindu* tradition hold the title of *Swāmi* as a sign of respect denoting spiritual accomplishment. *Hindu Sādhus* are easily and typically recognized by their saffron robes or ochre-colored clothing. Generally, *Vaiṣṇava* monks shave their heads except for a small patch of hair on the back of the head, while *Śaivite* monks in most traditions let their hair and beard grow uncut. A nun is called a *sanyāsinī*, *sādhavī*, or *swāminī*. Such renunciates are accorded high respect in *Hindu* society, because their outward renunciation of selfishness and worldliness serves as an inspiration to householders who strive for mental renunciation. Some monastics live in monasteries, while others wander from place to place, trusting in God alone to provide for their physical needs.<sup>66</sup> It is considered a highly meritorious act for a lay devotee to provide *sādhus* with food or other necessities. *Sādhus* are expected to treat all with respect and compassion, whether a person may be poor or rich, good or wicked. They are also expected to be indifferent to praise, blame, pleasure, and pain. *Hindu* monastic tradition varies somewhat from sect to sect. Historically this path has been open to males only, but some traditions now accept female renunciates as well.

A *Sādhū's* vow of renunciation typically forbids him from doing certain actions as follows:

- (i) owning personal property apart from a bowl, a cup, two sets of clothing and medical aids such as eyeglasses;
- (ii) having any contact with, looking at, thinking of or even being in the presence of women;
- (iii) eating for pleasure;
- (iv) possessing or even touching money or valuables in any way, shape or form;

---

<sup>65</sup> R.S. McGregor, *The Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary* (5th ed. 1999)

<sup>66</sup><http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monasticism>, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 63ii)

*Sādhus* and *Swāmis* occupy a unique and important place in *Hindu* society. Thus, the present-day *sādhus* likely represent the oldest continuous tradition of monastic mystical practice in the world.

*Sādhus* are also considered to be living embodiments of the divine, and images of what human life, in the *Hindu* view, is truly about religious illumination and liberation from the cycle of birth and death (*Samsāra*). It is also thought that the austere practices of the *sādhus* help to burn off their *karma* and that of the community at large. Thus seen as benefiting society, many people help support *sādhus* with donations. Thus, by and large, *sādhus* are still widely respected, revered and even feared, especially for their curses. However, reverence of *sādhus* in India is by no means universal. Indeed, *sādhus* have often been seen with a certain degree of suspicion, particularly amongst the urban populations of India. In popular pilgrimage cities, posing as a '*sādhu*' can be a means of acquiring income for beggars who could hardly be considered 'devout'. Some *sādhus* fake holy status to gain respect but they are normally discovered by true *sādhus*.

Madhvāchārya (Madhvā), the *Dvaita Vedanta* philosopher, established *aṣṭa matha* (Eight Monasteries). He appointed a monk (called *swāmiji* or *swāmigalu* in local parlance) for each *matha* or monastery who has the right to worship Lord Kṛṣṇa by rotation. Each *matha's* *swāmiji* gets a chance to worship after 14 years. This ritual is called *Paryāya*.

Monks from the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness (ISKCON), or Hare Kṛṣṇas as they are popularly known, are the best known *Vaiṣṇava* monks outside India. They are a common sight in many places around the world. Their appearance—simple saffron *dhoti*, shaved head with *sikhā*, *Tulasi* neckbeads and *tilaka* markings—and social customs (*vastra*) date back many hundreds of years to the Vedic era. ISKCON started as a predominantly monastic group but nowadays the majority of its members live as lay persons. Many of them, however, spent some time as monks. New persons joining ISKCON as full-time members (living in its centers) first undergo a three-month *Bhakta* training, which includes learning the basics of *brahmacāri* (monastic) life. After that they can decide if they prefer to continue as monks or as married *Grihasthas*. A *Brahmacāri* older than fifty years can become *sannyāsi*, which is a permanent decision that one cannot give up.

### 3.3 *Islamic monasticism*

While many *Muslims* do not believe in monasticism emphasizing that Allah rebukes monasticism as a man-made practice that is not divinely prescribed, various *Sufi* orders, or "*tariqas*" encourage practices which resemble those of monastic brotherhoods in other faiths.

*Dervishes*<sup>67</sup>, the name given to initiates of *sufi* orders believe that love is a projection of the essence of God to the universe. Many of the *dervishes* are mendicant ascetics who have taken the vow of poverty. Though some of them are beggars by choice, others work in common professions; Egyptian Qadirites, for example, are fishermen.

There are also various *dervish* brotherhoods who trace their origins from various *Muslim* saints and teachers, especially Muhammad Ali and Abu Bakr. They live in monastic conditions, superficially similar to *Christian* monk brotherhoods. They differ from spiritual brotherhoods of *Christianity* in that they usually do not live together in a 'monastery' setting; in this sense they do not go 'around' the world. Rather, they go 'through' it; it is actually a stipulation that they have families, and earn an ethical living. Various sects and sub sects have appeared and disappeared over the centuries e.g. *Mevlevi* sect in Turkey, *Rifgites* etc. Other groups include *Bektashites*, connected to the *Janissaries*, and *Senussi*, who are rather orthodox in their beliefs. All genuine brotherhoods and subgroups usually chant verses of *Qur'ān* (or *Korān*), and must follow the *śaria*, or Islamic sacred law. Some play drums or dance vigorously in groups, all according to their specific traditions. Each brotherhood uses its own garb and methods of acceptance and initiation, which may be rather severe. Traditionally monks in *Islam* have been known as *fakirs*. This term has also been applied to *Hindu* monks.

### 3.4 *Jain monasticism*

*Jainism*-the path of the *Jinas*, or victors, the oldest continuous monastic tradition in India is a monastic religion which like *Buddhism* denies the authority of the *Veda* and is therefore regarded by *Brāhmans* as heretical. This tradition is traced to Var-dhamāna Mahāvira (The Great Hero; 599-527 B.C.), the twenty-fourth and last of

---

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid,Op.cit.> (f.n. 51)

the *Tīrthaṅkaras* (*Saṅskrit* for formmakers). The main *jain* church consists of the monastic order and lay community.<sup>68</sup>

The change from hermit to monk comes with the emergence of the stricter *Jainists*.<sup>69</sup> The followers of *Mahāvira* in the 6th century BC are organized in strict orders of monks and nuns, devoting themselves to reducing the spiritual burden of *karma* while their few physical needs are looked after by lay members of the community. So, it is assumed that *Jainism* may be the first religion to have had an organized monastic life, which was characterized by extreme asceticism.<sup>70</sup> According to the *Jain* view, the soul (*jīva*) is a living substance that combines with various kinds of nonliving matter and through action accumulates particles of matter that adhere to it and determine its fate. Most of the matter perceptible to human senses, including all animals and plants, is attached in various degrees to living souls and is in this sense alive. Any action has consequences that necessarily follow the embodied soul, but the worst accumulations of matter come from violence against other living beings. The ultimate *Jain* discipline, therefore rests on complete inactivity and absolute nonviolence (*ahimsā*) against any living beings. Some *Jain* monks and nuns wear face masks to avoid accidentally inhaling small organisms, and all practicing believers try to remain vegetarians. The *Acaranga Sūtra*, or Book of Good Conduct, is a sacred book within *Jainism* that discusses the ascetic code of conduct.

*Jainism*<sup>71</sup> has two branches, each has a slightly different view on monasticism. *Digāmbara* or sky-clad monks do not wear clothing; however, they do not consider themselves to be nude. They envisage they are wearing the environment. *Digāmbaras* believe that practice represents a refusal to give in to the body's demands for comfort and private property. *Digāmbara* ascetics have only two possessions: a peacock-feather-broom and a watergourd. They also believe that women are unable to obtain *mokṣa*. As a result, of the around 6000 *Jain* nuns, barely 100 are *Digāmbaras*. The *Śvetāmbaras* or white clad are the other main *Jainist* sect. *Śvetāmbaras*, unlike *Digāmbaras*, neither believe that ascetics must practice nudity, nor do they believe that women are unable to obtain *mokṣa*.

<sup>68</sup> Hermann Jacobi, "Jainism" in *Cultural and Religious Heritage of India*, Vol. 2, (New Delhi: Mittal publication, 2004), P. 223

<sup>69</sup> <http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid,Op.cit.> (f.n. 51)

<sup>70</sup> Encyclopedia Britanica, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 45), P. 8

<sup>71</sup> Jacobi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 68), P. 223

*Śvetāmbaras* are commonly seen wearing face masks so that they do not accidentally breath in and kill small creatures. Full *Jain* monk in either *Śvetāmbara* or *Digāmbara* tradition can belong to one of these ranks: *Ācārya*: leader of the order *Upādhyāya*: a learned monk, who both teaches and studies himself and *Muni*: an ordinary monk.

## CHAPTER IV

### ***Buddhist* monasticism and its components**

Monasticism stands as one of the most fundamental institutions of *Buddhism*.<sup>72</sup> It is an integral part in all *Buddhist* traditions. It predates Christian monasticism, though the word monasticism is borrowed from the later. There is no other religion where monks played such a central part as in *Buddhism*. *Buddhist* monasticism attempts to create a form of disciplined life separate from the world in order to pursue the ascetic world-transcendent religious ideal.<sup>73</sup>

The life of *Śākyamuni Buddha* provides the basic model for *Buddhist* monasticism. Prince Siddhārtha Gautama before his attainment of enlightenment and turning into the *Buddha* went, on the "Middle Way," a life of moderate asceticism, between lay life and extreme asceticism. The exercise of meditation, learning, ethical conduct, and progress on the path to liberation were thought to be best managed in solitude, or at least in single-gender communities that did not engage society in traditionally accepted, lay-oriented ways. *Buddhists* believe that the best way to follow the path to enlightenment is to live a disciplined lifestyle, one conducive to generating awareness of one's mental states and the causally produced nature of all elements of existence.

The first person joining the *Saṅgha*, the *Buddhist* community receiving the ordination *pravajyā* (the going forth) into monkhood from the *Buddha* was Kaudinya. He was the one among the *Pañcavargiya* ascetics, who first experienced enlightenment upon hearing discourse of the *Buddha* on 'Four Noble Truths' also known as the *Buddha*'s first turning of wheel. In rapid succession the other four ascetics, Aśvajit, Vappa, Mahānāma, and Bhaddiya, attained enlightenment and were ordained as monks, thus the *Saṅgha* was expanded to six members. *Buddhist* literature describes in detail the rapid growth of the community in the months and

---

<sup>72</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist\\_monasticism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist_monasticism), Retrieved 2009.8.28

<sup>73</sup> George B. J. Dreyfus, *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), Pp. 32 -37.

years to include thousands of members.<sup>74</sup> Thus, the order of *Buddhist* monks and nuns was founded by *Śākyamuni Buddha* during his lifetime. To most Asian *Buddhists*, it would be impossible to imagine *Buddhism* without monks and monasteries.

The *Buddhist* monastic lifestyle grew out of the lifestyle of earlier sects of wandering ascetics, the *parivrājakas*, some of whom the *Buddha* had studied under. The *Buddhist* order was not the first in India. Jain and *Brāhmanical* communities, which served as prototypes for the early *Saṅgha*, were already established.<sup>75</sup> Surviving documents revealing how daily life was regulated in these communities offer evidence that the early *Buddhist* mendicants adopted some organizational features from them. For example, followers of contemporary religious groups gathered together periodically, so the early *Saṅgha* also began to gather on new moon and full moon days. The *Saṅgha* was not really isolationist or eremitic in nature as the *Saṅgha* was dependent on the lay community for basic provisions of food and clothing, and in return the *Saṅgha* members were to help guide the lay followers on the path of *Dharma*. In the beginning, individual monks or small groups of monks including a teacher and his students, or several monks - would travel together, living on the outskirts of local communities and practicing meditation in the forests.

However, fully developed *Buddhist* monasticism likely did not originate during the *Buddha's* lifetime. Still, *Buddhist* monks and nuns use the example of the *Buddha's* life story as a behavioral model and the tradition of supporting *Buddhist* monastics to study and practice full time is considered 2,500 years old.

A monk following this path is known as a *Bhikkhu* in *Pāli* or *Bhikṣu* in *Saṅskrit* and *Bhikkuni* or simply *Anāgārikā* is the term used for a nun. Monks and nuns are expected to fulfill a variety of roles in the *Buddhist* community. First and foremost, they are expected to preserve the doctrine and discipline of *Buddhism*. Secondly, they are also expected to provide a living example for the laity, and to serve as a "field of merit" for lay followers- providing laymen and women with the opportunity to earn merit by giving gifts and support to the monks. In other words,

---

<sup>74</sup> Charles S. Prebish, *Buddhist Monastic Disciplines- The Saṅskrit Prātimokṣa Sūtras of Mahāsaṅghikas and Mūlasarvāstivādins*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasiidass Publishers, 1996), P. 1

<sup>75</sup> Prebish, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 50), P.18

monks and nuns are responsible for preserving and spreading *Buddhist* teachings, as well as educating and guiding *Buddhist* lay followers. They are the persons taught in *Buddhist* teachings and so are the experts of *Buddhism*. In return for the support of the laity, monks and nuns are expected to live an austere life focused on the study of *Buddhist* doctrine, the practice of meditation, and the observance of good moral character. Monks circulate in society preaching, teaching, soliciting alms for the monastery. They involve the lay public rather than keeping them separate, with the result that monks have played a prominent part in all *Buddhist* societies.

The life of a householder is supposed to be full of entanglements, somewhat spiritually cramping, such that it was difficult for a layperson to perfect the 'holy-life'. Monasticism offers fewer obstacles to, and, more opportunities for, persistent and consistent spiritual practice minimizing attachments and limiting involvements found in lay life.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, most *Buddhist* schools consider monasticism as a superior way of life, one that all should respect and aspire to join in this or some future life.

The ultimate goal of *Buddhist* monasticism is the liberation of oneself and others from the cycle of rebirth through attainment of *Nirvāṇa*. Collectively, the ordained male (*Bhikṣu*) and female (*Bhikṣuṇī*) *Buddhist* monastics constitute two of the four-fold followers of the *Buddha* (the other two groups- *Upāsaka* being male and *Upāsika*, female lay followers).<sup>77</sup> All four groups are seen as being important and necessary for the survival and spread of *Buddhism* in the world, with the ordained vocation seen as being the highest achievement for a *Buddhist* practitioner.

The order of *Buddhist* monastics, known collectively and generically in all *Buddhist* traditions as *Saṅgha*, is much involved in the world. The literal meaning of *Saṅgha* is simply 'group'.<sup>78</sup> The purpose of the *Saṅgha* is two fold: to live in accordance with the *Dharma* for one's own salvation, and to spread the *Dharma* for the benefit of all others.<sup>79</sup> Monks and nuns are responsible for preserving and

---

<sup>76</sup> Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teaching, history and practices, South Asian Edition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Reprinted 2005), P.218

<sup>77</sup> Piyadassi, *The Spectrum of Buddhism- Writings of Piyadassi*, (Taipei: The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1991), P. 359.

<sup>78</sup> Perry Schmidt-Leukel, *Understanding Buddhism*, (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2007), P. 73.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74



spreading *Buddhist* teachings, as well as educating and guiding *Buddhist* lay followers.

The *Buddhist* monastic order is theoretically divided into two assemblies, the male *bhikkhu Saṅgha* (assembly), and the female *bhikkhuni Saṅgha* (assembly). Initially the *Saṅgha* consisted only of males, the *Buddhist* monastic order grew to include females after Mahāprajāpati, the *Buddha's* step-mother asked for and received permission to live as an ordained practitioner.

Monks and nuns are expected to live with a minimum of possessions, which are to be voluntarily provided by the lay community. Lay followers provide the daily food that monks required, and provided shelter for monks when they were needed. During *Buddha's* time, many retreats and gardens were donated by wealthy merchants for monks and nuns to stay in during the rainy season. *Buddhist* monks, for their part, continue to play an important social as well as religious role.

The *Buddhists* may have been the first renunciants to establish organized monastic communities. These communities founded many educational centers. Relieved of household responsibilities and attachments, the monks and nuns were able to concentrate single-pointedly on living a disciplined life and achieving the goal of liberation.

The *Sanskrit* word for becoming a *Buddhist* renunciates is *pravajyā* meaning "going forth."<sup>80</sup> It signifies leaving the household life and entering a state of homelessness. A *Bhikkhu* or *Bhikkhuni* (*Pāli*), first ordains as a *Śrāmaṇera* (novice) for a year or more and gets training under the close guidance of a qualified senior *Bhikṣu* or *Bhikṣuṇī* (*Sanskrit*) preceptor.<sup>81</sup> Male novices often ordain at a very young age, but generally no younger than eight. Women usually choose to ordain as adults, since there is no expectation that they do so in childhood. *Śrāmaṇeras* live according to the Ten Precepts, but are not responsible for living by the full set of monastic rules *Vinaya*. After some years of such training, one might enter the second stage of ordination, receiving the *Upasampadā* or ordination as a *Bhikṣu* or *Bhikṣuṇī*, signifying full admission into the *Saṅgha*, or monastic order. Higher ordination, conferring the status of a full *Bhikkhu* or *Bhikkhuni*, is usually given

---

<sup>80</sup> Piyadassi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 77), P. 362

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, P. 361

only to those aged 20 or older. Women monastics follow a similar progression, but are required to live as *Śrāmaṇikā* equivalent to *Śrāmaṇeras* for a longer period of time, typically five years. Rules and regulations for being monastics may differ as per the tradition of the country or community. In *Newār* tradition, ordination is given to the boys mostly during their childhood days as a part of social obligation after which he is considered as the member of the *Saṅgha*.

The patched saffron robes and shaved head are the most obvious signs of a *Buddhist's* monastic commitment.<sup>82</sup> Wearing robes entails an obligation of honesty with regard to one's moral conduct and denotes to a declaration that one is observing the precepts of a *Buddhist* monastic. *Saṅgha* members are therefore traditionally regarded as worthy of trust, respect, and offerings.

Sometimes, renunciation is wrongly interpreted as a kind of escapism. It is not correct to say that a *Buddhist* monk runs away from society.<sup>83</sup> In fact, s/he gets more involved in the world. The ideal monk, the *Bhikṣu*, is an altruist of the highest type who takes least from, and gives much, to society. In *Dhammapada*, monk's life is likened to that of a bee which, without harming the flower, its colour and fragrance, takes away the honey; in the same way the sage should move in the village.<sup>84</sup> To him the whole world is one family and he treats all alike. The purpose of the *Buddhist* monastic code is to establish optimal conditions for the achievement of liberation. Observing the precepts helps beings control the passions that entangle them in *saṃsāra* and fosters the awareness needed to precipitate liberation. The disciplinary regulations for monks and nuns are intended to create a life that is simple and focused, rather than one of deprivation or severe asceticism. Celibacy is of primary importance in monastic discipline in earlier *Buddhism*, seen as being the preeminent factor in separating the life of a monastic from that of a householder, but it is relaxed in later *Buddhism* bringing in a new turn in *Buddhist* monasticism. Depending on the tradition and the strictness of observation, monastics may eat only one meal a day, provided either by direct donations of food

---

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*, P. 360

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, P. 363

<sup>84</sup> *Dhammapada*, verse 49,

*Yathā'pi bhamaro pupphaṃ vaṇṇa gandham aheṭham*

*Paleti easam'ādāya evaṃ gāme muni care*

K.Sri Dhammananda, *The Dhammapada*, (Kuala Lumpur: Sasana Abhiwurdhi Wardhana Society, 2<sup>nd</sup> reprint 1992), P. 135

from lay supporters, or from a monastery kitchen that is stocked (and possibly staffed) by lay supporters.

Unlike Christian monastics, *Buddhist* monastics do not require to live a life of obedience to a superior. However, it is expected that monastics will offer respect to senior members<sup>85</sup> of the *Saṅgha*. The *Buddha* did not appoint a successor, nor did he specify rules mandating obedience in the monastic code. Individual groups of monastics are expected to make decisions collectively through regular gatherings of the community, at which decisions regarding violations of monastic rules and the dispositions of communal property are to be made. Individual relationships of teacher/student, senior/junior, and preceptor/trainee may be observed among groups of monastics, but there are no formal positions, nor is there any authority to give orders or commands invested in senior monks. An abbess or abbot, typically a senior monastic still young enough to be active, is usually responsible for the day-to-day administration of the monastery, and may appoint others to assist with the work. In some traditions, the abbess/abbot is chosen by a vote of the monastics in a monastery. In other traditions (Thailand, for example), the abbot is chosen by the lay community.

After the *Mahāparinirvāṇa*<sup>86</sup> of the *Buddha*, the *Buddhist* monastic order developed into a primarily coenobitic movement. The practice of living communally during the rainy season (*varsāvāssa*), prescribed by the *Buddha*, gradually grew to encompass a settled monastic life centered on life in a community of practitioners.<sup>87</sup> Most of the modern disciplinary rules followed by monks and nuns—the *Pātimokkha*<sup>88</sup>—relate to such an existing, prescribing in great detail proper methods for living in a community of monks or nuns. A *Bhikṣu* is expected to observe a set of certain monastic rules. The number of rules observed varies with the order; *Theravāda* monks follow around 227 rules.<sup>89</sup> It is even larger for *Bhikkhunīs* counting up to 311.

---

<sup>85</sup> in Thai tradition, seniority is based on the number of rains retreats, *varsāvāssas*, that one has observed, while in Nepal it is counted on the basis of the year of ordination.

<sup>86</sup> Final passing away of the *Buddha*.

<sup>87</sup> Prebish, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 50), Pp. 18-19

<sup>88</sup> Rules of monks and nuns in *saṅgha*

<sup>89</sup> This is in Indian tradition. The number of rules varies in other traditions.

In the *Buddhist* lifestyle from a monastic point of view there are many aspects of monastic life for which practitioners are trained in traditional way. However, the training that can be utilized - albeit in an adapted form - in lay practice. From the *Buddhist* scriptures it becomes apparent that while there were teachings given to lay people, the majority of teaching given by the *Buddha* was to monks and nuns. This leads to a commonly asked question: 'Does one have to be ordained or can lay people get enlightened?' There are references in the scriptures to lay people getting enlightened during the time of the *Buddha* and, having been both a lay person and a monk. And this must have given rise the concept of Householder monks which is in practice in Kathmandu and other countries like Japan, Korea etc.

#### 4.1 Monasticism in early *Buddhism*

In early *Buddhism*, monasticism aimed to seek the attainment of *Nibbana*, escaping from the suffering (*dukkha*).<sup>90</sup> It is still survived in *Theravāda* tradition. Strict rules are followed and celibacy is stressed. The literary sources of early phase are largely based on *Buddhist Pāli* literature. In earlier *Buddhist* monasticism, there are two ways of leading the life of a monk: (i) one entails continuous meditation (*Vipassana-dhura*) and (ii) the other part time meditation, studying and teaching the *Dhamma* (*grantha-dhura*). It is obligatory for every *Bhikṣu* to take up one or other of these ways according to temperament, age and environment.<sup>91</sup> Today, earlier form of monasticism still survives in southern Buddhism though with some local modifications.

#### 4.2 Monasticism in later *Buddhism*

It is true that with the passage of time many changes have taken place yet the genuine *Buddhist* monk is regarded as that who renounces worldly pleasures, endeavours to lead a simple and exemplary life with high aim of serving others selflessly within the bounds of a *Bhikṣu* life. In later *Buddhist* monasticism, the ideal of spiritual practice and salvation dominated the lives of monks/practitioners pursuing the attainment of Buddhahood. While earlier monasticism seems relied

---

<sup>90</sup> I.B. Horner (trans.), *The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Pitaka)*, Vol. V, (*Cullavagga*), (London: Luzac & Compay Ltd., 1963), P. 219.

<sup>91</sup> Piyadassi, *The Buddha's Ancient Path*, (UK: Rider & Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Srilankan impression, 1987), P. 108

more upon following *vinaya*, the later monasticism gave greater importance to philosophical ideals. And the literary source of later phase shifted to Buddhist *Sanskrit* literature. This form of monasticism is in practice in Northern Buddhism.

It is well to admit that there are a number of disputed points in the practice of *vinaya* (code of conduct) resulting in proliferation of a number of *Buddhist* sects and so is it in the monasticism followed. But, as pointed out by Alex Wayman, it is remarkable to note that the separation of *Buddhist* practice into various *Buddhist* sects was due to doctrinal and not *Vinaya* disagreements.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, the existing forms of *Buddhism* categorized into *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* have different types of monasticism governed by their doctrinal faiths. Some like Japanese *Zen*, *Nicheren*, *Jodo shenshu*, Korean *Gingāk*, some Chinese *Buddhist* order, Nepalese *Newār Buddhist* order even have house holder monks mandated by their societies instead of celibate monks.

Later *Buddhist* monasticism describes itself as middle path accommodating timely changes while still preserving *Buddhist* essence. Nevertheless, it is ascetic in that its discipline is aimed at overcoming the limitation of ordinary life seeking individual perfection-*Nirvāṇa* (Buddhahood in *Mahāyāna*), it involves a separation from the ways of the world.

Similarly, monasticism is defined as an institution of communal living in order to pursue a spiritual state through living a disciplined and ritualized daily life<sup>93</sup>, befits here. Livin Kohn<sup>94</sup> highlights the social roles of Monasticism. She mentions that monasticism is always located between the need to provide optimal conditions for an individual's attainment of holiness and the necessity to keep order and control within the monastic community and in its interaction with normative society as indeed the social aspects are very important.

Huaiyu Chen<sup>95</sup> describes *Buddhist* monasticism as the sum-total of issues or activities centred around a monastery, like veneration ritual of *Buddha's* relics,

---

<sup>92</sup> George R. Elder(Ed.), *Buddhist Insight-Essays by Alex Wayman*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt, Ltd., 2002), P. 29

<sup>93</sup> Huaiyu Chen, *The Revival of Buddhist Monasticism in Medieval China*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2007), Pp. 1-7

<sup>94</sup> Livin Kohn, *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism: A Cross-cultural Perspective*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003), P. 1

<sup>95</sup> Chen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 93), P. 7

ritual of ordination and so forth. *Buddhist* monks of later monasticism also created their own culture and traditions in *Buddhist Saṃskṛit* language during medieval period, using their own literary forms.

Deegale<sup>96</sup> opines that *Buddhist* monasticism does not view renunciation as the first step in religious training. He also agrees against applying the *Christian* concept to *Buddhism* as some make comparison between their monasticisms because *Buddhist* monks and nuns were not hermits who lived independently. Instead, they received support from human settlements and also disseminated the *Buddha*'s teaching.

The goal of *Buddhism* is *nirvāṇa* which involves not only an understanding of the teachings but a supportive lifestyle. This foundation is essentially the same for everyone as is our shared humanity. The difference for monastics is the level of refinement possible; in the opportunity to study and practice the teachings.

Monasticism has been one of the focus on *Buddhist* tradition all over the world in the field of *Buddhist* studies. As a result, in 2002 there held a conference on the very subject '*Buddhist* monasticism: Asian Perspective' at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, in 2004, a conference on '*Buddhist* monasticism in East Asia' was held in Cambridge University, Cambridge, England.<sup>98</sup>

#### 4.3 Components of *Buddhist* Monasticism

*Buddha* made monasticism an inseparable part of his creed. *Buddhist* monasticism is devoting maximum time to *Buddhist* practice so that the practitioners can have conducive environment for their pursuit of spiritual goal. As originally conceived, the function of *Buddhist* monasticism is twofold: to provide suitable conditions for one's personal development, and to teach the *Dharma* to other people. It developed monastery as the right place as the integral part for such practice with all requisites and paraphernalia in one place.

---

<sup>96</sup> Mahinda Deegalle, "Monasticism, Definitions of: Buddhist Perspective" in William M. Johnston(ed.), *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, (Chicago, Fitzroy Dearborn, 2000), Pp. 868-871

<sup>97</sup> Chen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 93), Pp. 1-7

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

Monasticism varies significantly according to location. In part, this can be attributed to differences in the scriptural and doctrinal traditions that were received in different parts of the *Buddhist* world. Additionally, local concessions to social, geographical, political and climatic conditions have been adopted by most monastic orders in order to smooth the integration of monks into local communities, and to ensure that monks live in a safe and reasonable manner. The result is that monastic practice of each *Buddhist* country or region has a distinctive 'flavour' or appearance. Monastically the differences can be quite superficial - with connections to the traditional values. Each tradition also has a different approach to practice – *Buddhist* monasticism.

Therefore, according to difference in circumstances, *Buddhist* monasticism varies considerably in different countries. The most notable difference is found between *Theravāda* monasticism as practiced in Srilanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia etc., and the *Mahāyāna* Order in China, Japan, and Korea, along with extreme adaptations in Nepal, Tibet, and Outer Mongolia. Difference also exists in the monasticism practiced among Srilanka, Myanmar, Thailand and Cambodia though they all belong to so called *Theravāda* Tradition.

Though *Buddhist* monasticism had undergone several changes from simplicity to complexity or vice versa in due course of time of nearly two thousand six hundred years, according to circumstances depending upon time period, sectarian views, location etc., there are some defining similarities, on the basis of which some essential components of monasticism can now be asserted. If these components are present in a *Buddhist* system one can say there is monasticism. Otherwise, there prevails controversy whether there is monasticism or not.

As revealed, the essential components of *Buddhist* monasticism are as follows.

**4.3.1 Triple gems-** The *Buddha*(the Teacher), the *Dharma* (the teaching) and the *Saṅgha* (the taught fellows)

The most important part of the monasticism is the Triple Gems- the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *Saṅgha*. *Buddhist* monasticism is to practice the *Dharma* (the teaching) expounded by the *Buddha* (the teacher) to his disciples (*Saṅgha*, the taught persons). As illustrated by a phrase central to *Buddhist* philosophy: “I take refuge in the *Buddha*, I take refuge in the *Dharma*, I take refuge in the *Saṅgha*.”

these Triple gems are regarded as objects of refuge in *Buddhism*. Three Jewels, which *Śākyamuni Buddha* prescribed on his followers were, “I believe in the *Buddha*, in the *Dharma* (doctrine) and the *Saṅgha* (monastic order).” Therefore, a monastic premise must compulsorily have (i) the *Buddha*- represented most often by image or statues of the *Buddhas* or representation of the *Buddha* by various other images of *Bodhisattvas* or *Buddhist* objects or the teachers well versed in *Buddhist* doctrine, (ii) the *Dharma* in the form of holy *Buddhist* canons or scriptures or the discourses made by the *Buddhist* teachers; So, *sūtras* and the *Buddhist* scriptures are regarded as *Dharma Ratna* meaning ‘the words of the *Buddha*’<sup>99</sup>, and (iii) the *Saṅgha*, the community of learned or trainees exercising *Buddhist* practice. These three objects are complimentary to each other and are sometimes treated as the same. Nevertheless, *Buddhists* do show great reverence to the *Buddha* as a supreme teacher and an exemplar of the ultimate goal that all strive for, so that probably more images of him exist than of any other historical figure.<sup>100</sup> Where-ever is the *Buddha*, there is the *Dharma* and wherever *Dharma* resides, *Saṅgha* follows. In *Mahāyāna*, these three triple gems are iconographically shown in art form of the *Buddha*, *Prajñāpārāmitā Devi* and *Ṣaḍkṣerī Lokeśwara* respectively. *Buddhist* monasticism can not be imagined without inclusion of three jewels.

In the beginning of monasticism before the concept of monastery was established, only these three jewels played the sole role, as it consisted of only them. *Vinaya* had yet to be formulated and was formed after the substantial growth of the *Saṅgha* members. The *Saṅgha* was dependent on the lay community for basic provisions of food and clothing, and in return the *Saṅgha* members were to help guide the lay followers on the path of *Dharma*. Therefore, *Saṅgha* member was not really isolationist or eremitic in nature.

#### 4.3.2 *Saṅgha*

*Saṅgha* has a great importance in *Buddhism*. It is one of the key components of *Buddhist* monasticism. Actually it is the generic term for the *Buddhist* monastic order- the group of sincere practitioners of the *Dharma*. *Buddhism*, far more than in other monastic traditions of the world attaches central importance to the order.

<sup>99</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 11

<sup>100</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P.2



Therefore, *Saṅgha* literally means a group of practitioners of the *Dharma*, members of which follow a set of prescribed rules and regulations, synonymously known also as *Vinaya* or *prācīmoksya*. From historical point of view, the *Saṅgha* represents an institution. An institution, in anthropological language, is a group of people committed for some purpose, following prescribed rules and making up a structure.<sup>101</sup> *Saṅgha* together with *Buddha* and *Dharma* are called *Tri-ratna* (Triple gems) upon which refuge is taken. It is an ancient tradition of the *Buddhists* to propagate the *Dharma* by establishing *Saṅgha*.

The most important bearers of the *Buddhist* tradition have been the monks and nuns who make up the *Buddhist Saṅgha* or ‘Community’<sup>102</sup>, one of the Three Jewels without which *Buddhism* is incomplete.<sup>103</sup>

Collectively, the ordained male and female *Buddhist* monastics constitute two of the four groups ‘*Catu pariṣada*’<sup>104</sup> (the other two groups being male and female lay followers) and compose the *Buddhist Saṅgha*. All four groups are seen as being important and necessary for the survival and spread of *Buddhism* in the world, with the ordained vocation seen as being the highest achievement for a *Buddhist* practitioner. Unless one takes *Pravajyā* or ordination he is not considered the member of the *Saṅgha*. So, *Saṅgha* also denotes to a group of venerable ones who have undergone ordination with due faith and have undertaken vows to comply by the prescribed rules. Otherwise, those who live the life according to *Buddhist* education or lesson with due faith are called *upāsaka* (male lay follower) or *upāsika* (female lay follower).

*Buddhist* Monasticism indeed is the activities of the noble *Saṅgha*. The *Saṅgha* is the society of the monastics or the ‘Living *Buddhas*’ who are either enlightened or destined to achieve the ultimate goal.<sup>105</sup> The *Saṅgha* represents unity and continuity of the great tradition. It is the place where individuals seek refuge to escape worldly sufferings. It is often defined as retreat from the world. But the *Saṅgha*

<sup>101</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10), P. 23

<sup>102</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P. 218

<sup>103</sup> Shanker Thapa(ed), *Northern Buddhism in History*, (Kathmandu: Vajra Publications, 2008), preface

<sup>104</sup> *Catu pariṣada* means four assemblies- Assembly of *bhikṣus*, *bhikṣunis*, *upāsakas* and *upāsikās*

<sup>105</sup> Prebish, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 74)

itself is a kind of world which is existing from *Buddha's* time. It is the oldest historical continuity in human history.

The *Buddha* valued self-reliance, and left the *Saṅgha* as a community of individuals sharing a life under the guidance of *Dhamma*. The job of its members is to strive for their own spiritual development, and use their knowledge and experience of *Dhamma* to guide others, when asked. Nevertheless, in practice they have also come to serve the laity in several priest- like ways. Members of the *Saṅgha* have probably comprised the most numerous clergy in the world. This *Saṅgha* of the Blessed One's disciples is:

- (i) worthy of gifts
- (ii) worthy of hospitality
- (iii) worthy of offerings
- (iv) worthy of reverential salutation
- (v) the unsurpassed field of merit for the world."

#### 4.3.3 Monks/Nuns

The *Buddhist* monastic order known collectively as *Saṅgha*, is theoretically divided into two assemblies, the male *bhikkhu* assembly (in *Pāli*, or *Bhikṣu* in *Sanskrit*), and the female *bhikkhuni* (skt. *Bhikṣuṇī*) assembly. Initially consisting only of males, the *Buddhist* monastic order grew to include females after the *Buddha's* step-mother, Mahāprajāpati, asked for and received permission to live as an ordained practitioner. The *Saṅgha* is formed by these monks and nuns. But, it consists mainly of monks as the number of nuns is either small or absent in most of the *Saṅgha*. In modern practice, the *bhikkhuni* lineage died out in some *Theravāda* communities. It failed to be established in the *Vajrayāna* communities of Tibet except in a few orders. In *Nepal-maṇḍala* also, its tradition vanished.

In no religion have monks played such a central part as in *Buddhism*. Leading his followers into holiness, the *Buddha* also organizes them into communities. The community of monks and nuns, serves as a model to other *Buddhists* as to how to live an ethical life. By pursuing this path, they provide an ethical model for the entire community, and it is their example *Buddhist* laypeople follow when striving for a moral life. One of their main contributions to *Buddhist* society is serving as role models for other *Buddhists*. However, they also serve their community in a

more hands-on capacity, by teaching, guiding and assisting laypeople. In fact, the *Buddha* insisted that members of the *Saṅgha* provide instruction for laypeople and teach them how to live ethical lives.

The monks are much involved in the world though they outwardly look like aloof. Monks circulate in society preaching, teaching, collecting their daily food in their begging bowls, soliciting alms for the monastery. They involve the lay public rather than keeping it separate, with the result that monks have played a prominent part in all *Buddhist* societies.

Monks and nuns are expected to fulfill a variety of roles in the *Buddhist* community. First and foremost, they are expected to preserve the doctrine and discipline now known as *Buddhism*. They are also expected to provide a living example for the laity, and to serve as a "field of merit" for lay followers- providing laymen and women with the opportunity to earn merit by through the practice of generosity (*dāna*) and support to the monks. In return for the support of the laity, monks and nuns are expected to live an austere life focused on the study of *Buddhist* doctrine, the practice of meditation, and the observance of good moral character. Members of the *Saṅgha* also perform rituals both at the monastery and at the homes of laypeople and they may even go to the homes of dying people to recite *sūtras*, which the teachings of the *Buddha*.

#### 4.3.4 Monastery

Monastery is the main house of triple gems. So, it is also regarded as the basic component of *Buddhist* monasticism. In *Buddhist* society, monasteries are not merely places where monks and nuns live, study and worship, they are also places from which *Buddhist* laypeople can draw inspiration. They are also ever-present reminders of the goal of the *Buddhist* path: to transcend attachment to the material world and thereby reach *Nirvāṇa*.

The monastery is actually a monastery / temple complex, which includes section for teaching *Dharma* lessons as well as halls in which the laypeople can attend and participate in ceremonies. It is also the dwelling place of *Saṅgha* members.

Monasteries have long had an interdependent relationship with their communities. They look to the community for food and money, and the monasteries open their

doors to laypeople who need spiritual guidance. In fact, this interaction is an important part of *Buddhist* tradition. In return for the community's support, the monks and nuns provide an ethical model for other *Buddhists* to live by, and give laypeople a spiritual goal to aspire to.

In the beginning the *Bhikṣus* lived an itinerant lifestyle, staying at the foot of trees and going to villages and towns to gather their daily meal in an alms bowl and to give *Dharma* teachings. Although they were dependent upon the lay followers for alms, the optimal condition for achieving liberation was said to be staying in seclusion in the forest, aloof from society. There was no monastery at that time. As the *Saṅgha* grew, the *Buddha* sent the *Bhikṣus* out to disseminate the teachings far and wide saying, "Let not two go in the same direction." This instruction helped prevent the formation of strong bonds of attachment to places or people. Gradually the *Bhikṣus* and *Bhikṣuṇīs* began to assemble in seasonal settlements for three months during the rainy season to avoid stepping on the insects that abounded during that time. Eventually these settlements became more or less fixed residences, developing into separate communities for the *Bhikṣus* and *Bhikṣuṇīs*. During *Buddha's* time, many retreats and gardens were donated by wealthy citizens for monks and nuns to stay in during the rainy season. It grew out two kinds of living quarters for monks and nuns.<sup>106</sup>

1. *Āvāsa*- this was a temporary house for monastics called a *Vihāra*. Generally, more than one monk used to stay in each house with each monk getting his own individual cell called a *parivena*.
2. *Ārāma*-this was more permanent and more comfortable than an *āvāsa*. This property was generally donated and maintained by a wealthy merchant. This was more lavish as the name suggests (*Ārāma* means pleasant and also means "park"). It generally consisted of residences within orchards or parks.

In *Buddhist* literature, the terms *ārāma* and *vihāra* were used to denote a dwelling place of monks. In beginning, a small cottage (*kuṭi*) where the monks dwell was called *ārāma*. So at that time Venuvana of Rājgriha was called as *ārāma*. A residential complex constructed by Anathapindaka in Srāvasti was named Jetavana *Vihāra*. It was donated to the *Buddha* and his *Saṅgha* by Anathapindaka. This

---

<sup>106</sup> Details are given in the *Mahāvagga* section of the *Vinaya* and *Varsāvastu* texts

indicates that in the beginning Lord *Buddha* and his disciples started to live in *ārāma* and *vihāra*. Slowly *Saṅghārāma* was formed in the form of a group of residence for the *Bhikṣu* community (*samūha*). Actually *Vihāras* were constructed after the establishment of a *Saṅgha*. In one of the *pātras* (begging bowl) of the Gupta period, there is mention of an *Ārogya Vihāra Bhikṣu Saṅghasya*.<sup>107</sup>

It clearly shows that monasteries existed from the time of the *Buddha*. In the remote past, it was in the monasteries where the *Buddha*'s doctrine was preached, discussions held, and new scripts written. Later, the monasteries grew into great universities as the important centres of learning.<sup>108</sup> Taxila, Nālandā, and Vikramaśīla were some of eminent universities of ancient India. Some *Buddhist Vihāras* originated and flourished at a time when the *Theravāda* school was prominent. These *Vihāras* were built on the pattern of rural dwelling houses. With the evolution of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, *Mahāyāna Vihāras* appeared slightly different in construction from the *Theravāda* ones. Korn notes that the basic structure did not change in the whole course of two thousand years history.<sup>109</sup>

Originally, a monastery was a place of adoration and religious learning for the *Buddhists*. It also served as residence of the learned *Buddhist* monks. Monasteries provide a multifaceted discussion of religious, social, cultural, artistic, and political functions of *Buddhist* tradition. These have been the intellectual centres of *Buddhism*, taking a strong role in society.<sup>110</sup> Relieved of household responsibilities and attachments, the monks and nuns staying at a monastery were able to concentrate single-pointedly on living a disciplined life and achieving the goal of liberation. Monasteries became means for the spread of literate cultures throughout the ancient world and held an important place in promoting charitable causes, building libraries, hospitals, schools and universities.

---

<sup>107</sup> Vasudeva Upadhyaya, *Prāchīn Bharatiya Stupa, Guhā Avam Mandir (Ancient Indian Stupa, Caves and Temples)*, (Kadamkuwa: Vihāra Hindi Grantha Academy Samaylam Bhawan, 1972), Pp.97-98

<sup>108</sup> John K. Locke, *Karuṇāmaya, The Cult of Avlokiteswara-Matsyendranātha in the Valley of Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan for CNAS, 1980), P.64

<sup>109</sup> Wolfgang P. Korn, *The Traditional Architecture of the Kathmandu Valley*, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1998, first print 1976), P.26

<sup>110</sup> Johannes P. Schade, *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, (New York: Foreign Media Group, 2006)

The biggest overall difference between the two opportunities - lay and monastic is time factor, and this provides the greatest challenge: how to incorporate the various aspects of the *Buddha's* teaching into an 'everyday' life?. Monastery provides an opportunity for full time *Buddhist* practice. The outside world is fraught with many distractions and gives less support to one's spiritual practice than monastic life. Living in a convent or monastery, one is constantly reminded of the divine nature within and the spiritual ideal.

Activities usually carried out in the monastery are

- (i) Reading/recitation of the scriptures
- (ii) The monasteries frequently serve as the storehouse of religious scriptures or library and also as news and information center(e.g. Jana *Bāhā* for settling dispute of calendar) and the surplus money is used to make schools.
- (iii) Maintenance of Monasticism by creating literate societies
- (iv) Ordination and Initiation of monks
- (v) Serving as *Buddhist* religious shrine
- (vi) Academic centre
- (vii) Centre of other religious activities like celebration of festivals, and cultural observances.
- (viii) Lodging place for *Saṅgha* members/monks

#### 4.3.5 Monastic Code or *Vinaya* or the rules for the monastics

Monasticism is governed by a set of rules. The monastics in the *Theravāda* tradition are bound to observe the *prāttimokkha* treatise called *Vinaya*. *Vinaya* referred to the established norms of the *Saṅgha* that all members were expected to observe to maintain the monastic order and insure its continuation.<sup>111</sup> But in the *Mahāyāna* which prevails in Nepal, Tibet, China, Korea and Japan, the monks do not lay emphasis on observing the rules of the *Vinaya* so strictly. There flexibility towards complying *Vinaya* is evident from the fact that they have not promulgated their own *Vinaya* code.<sup>112</sup> However, *Mahāyāna Buddhist* monks and nuns adhered

---

<sup>111</sup> Charles S. Prebish, "Text and Tradition in the Study of Buddhist Ethics," *Pacific World*, NS 9 (1993), Pp. 49-68.

<sup>112</sup> Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism, The Doctrinal Foundations*, First published 1989, (London and New York: Routledge, Reprint 1991), P. 5

to *Vinaya* rules which were promulgated by *Buddhist* schools which were non *Mahāyānic* traditions like *Mahāsāṃghika*, *Sarvāstivāda*, *Dharmaguptika* and so forth. For example, Tibetan *Mahāyāna* adopted *Mūlsarvāstivāda Vinaya* of *Sarvāstivādin* while Chinese *Mahāyānik* monks adhered to the *Sarvāstivāda* and/or *Dharmaguptika Vinaya*. The ethical guidelines these monks and nuns must adhere to are far stricter than those prescribed to laypeople, but by obeying these rules, members of the *Saṅgha* serve as an inspiration to other *Buddhists* that a moral life is within their reach.

*Saṅgha* members make a voluntary, usually lifelong, commitment to maintain certain precepts and standards of behavior; it is important to consider this commitment seriously before making it. The most fundamental requirements are to refrain from taking life; what is not given; sexual conduct; taking telling untruths; taking intoxicants; attending entertainment; using ornaments, cosmetics, and perfumes; sitting on luxurious seats and beds; taking food at unregulated times, and handling silver and gold. In addition, many other precepts help monastics remain mindful of every action in daily life. To take the precepts lightly, saying "This precept is not that important," or "This precept is impossible to keep," violates the precept that prohibits belittling the precepts. To the casual observer, many of the secondary precepts appear trivial and irrelevant to spiritual pursuit; even to the dedicated practitioner their abundance can be discouraging. Relating back to the classic clerical debate over the letter versus the spirit of the rule, one may also argue that adhering to technical correctness rather than embodying the spirit of the precepts is counterproductive to the achievement of liberation.

The disciplinary regulations for monks and nuns are intended to create a life that is simple and focused, rather than one of deprivation or severe asceticism. Celibacy is normally of primary importance in monastic discipline in earlier monasticism. Depending on the tradition and the strictness of observation, monastics may eat only one meal a day, provided either by direct donations of food from lay supporters, or from a monastery kitchen that is stocked (and possibly staffed) by donations from lay supporters.

The purpose of the *Buddhist* monastic code is to establish optimal conditions for the achievement of liberation. Observing the precepts helps beings control the passions that entangle them in *saṃsāra* and fosters the awareness needed to

precipitate liberation. The *Prātimokṣa* texts emphasize the practice of virtuous actions and the forswearing of negative actions in order to progress toward liberation from cyclic existence. *Vinaya* is not of primary importance in monasticism.<sup>113</sup> It is secondary and is like a boat that preserves the *Dharma*. However it is necessary for smooth running of the monasticism.

In the monastic literature, whenever the *Buddha* prohibited an action and instituted a rule, he did so to please his disciples. *Buddhist* monastic life is considered a liberation from mental and physical bondage and conducive to religious development. In the monastic literary corpus there are many examples of the advantages of monastic life.

#### 4.3.6 Regular Councils

*Buddhist* monasticism with its tradition of councils, missions, being a source of knowledge and literacy spread from India to the Middle East and eventually West, with *Christian* monasticism following in its footsteps in the areas where Emperor Aśoka sent missions.<sup>114</sup> *Buddhist* history shows that regular holding councils had been a part of *Buddhist* monasticism. Great *Buddhist* councils<sup>115</sup> were convened in the history from time to time and major disputes were settled. First four great councils had been very important in shaping *Buddhist* monasticism. There are dissensions regarding forth council. *Mahāyānists* believed the forth(4<sup>th</sup>) council to be that convened during Kaniṣka's time through his patronage while *Theravādins* held the view that it was the council convened in Srilanka by the then king Vattagamini Abhaya. In the first council, *Sūtra pitaka* and *Vinaya pitakas*, the two great sections of *Tripitaka*, the holy *Buddhist* canon were formed. The second council<sup>116</sup> was decisive on several disputes which resulted in first schism in the *Śaṅgha*. The third council brought in preventive measures in purification of the monasticism and provided first insertion of *Abhidharma* in the form of *Kathāvatthu*. The fourth council of Kaniṣka time had been instrumental in giving

---

<sup>113</sup> Elder, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 92)

<sup>114</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aśoka>, Retrieved 2009.9.20

<sup>115</sup> (i) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist\\_councils](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist_councils), Retrieved 2009.9.20

(ii) P.V. Bapat. (Ed.), *2500 Years of Buddhism*, 6<sup>th</sup> Reprint (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1997), Pp. 31-49

<sup>116</sup> Nalinaksha Dutta, *Buddhist Sects in India*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., reprint 1998), P. 32



rise to *Mahāyānic* form of monasticism by integrating several new elements while that of Vattagamini became fruitful in strengthening further the *Theravādin* monasticism. Later, there held several other councils regionally and internationally. The activities of the *Saṅgha* regarding monasticism are reflected in the councils. Nowadays, the councils are held in various *Buddhist* fraternities in different forms like seminars, conferences which may be in local, regional or international levels. Therefore, regular council has also been the mark of monasticism in *Buddhism*. The major tasks of the council are recitation of *Buddhist* scriptures according the sects, formulation of code of conduct for monasticism and settlement of disputes if any and other related discussion.

In addition to above mentioned components of monasticism, some other scholars like Edward Conze had added poverty, celibacy and inoffensiveness also as the components. But, these are not considered here, as they come under the monastic code/*Vinaya*. Before making decision on whether a group is following monasticism or not, above mentioned components be should traced and considered. Gross superficial assumption made by looking on some of changing *Vinaya* rules will be less tenacious, wrong and injustice while evaluating *Buddhist* monasticism of a particular tradition.

## CHAPTER V

### *Buddhist Monasticism through the ages*

After the enlightenment of *Śākyamuni Buddha*, *Buddhism* was established in Indian subcontinent. Soon it crossed the boundary of regional expansion and spread to countries outside India. *Buddhism* has undergone various historical phases of development in new distant places with diverse social systems and cultural traditions. Over half of the present world population live in areas where *Buddhism* is, or has been, a dominant cultural force.<sup>117</sup> *Buddhism* being the most flexible religion went on adapting to changed cultural contexts wherever it spread. Its motto of cessation of suffering attracted vast number of desperate people for whom it became comfortable platform to dwell in. It, in fact, provided a solace of magnitude to mankind. It provided a rational solution to psychological, moral or spiritual problem. The spread of *Buddhism* beyond the borders of India represents one of the most fascinating aspects of human civilization for whatever changes *Buddhism* brought in their societies, it redefined the entire repertoire of human experiences.<sup>118</sup> This is evident from the history of Tibet, Srilanka, Thailand, Myanmar, Korea, Japan and so forth.

The emphasis on the teachings of the *Buddha*, and the awakening of human personality gave impetus to evolution of practice which led towards *Buddhist* monasticism. For this, *Buddhists* do show great reverence to the *Buddha* as a supreme teacher and an exemplar of *Buddhist* monasticism aiming at the ultimate goal attaining *nirvāṇa* that all strive for, so that probably more images of him existed today than of any other historical figure.<sup>119</sup> *Buddhist* teaching is transforming oneself. The guide for this process of transformation has been the '*Dharma*': meaning the eternal truths and cosmic law-orderliness discovered by the *Buddhas*. Therefore, monasticism essentially consists of methods and tools for understanding, practicing and realizing *Dharma*.

<sup>117</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P.1

<sup>118</sup> Pankaj N. Mohan, "The Buddhist Transformation of Silla Kingship: Buddha as a king and King as a Buddha" in '*Northern Buddhism in History*' edited by Shanker Thapa, P. 191.

<sup>119</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P.2

Edward Conze<sup>120</sup> presented a short history of *Buddhism* dividing the time period into (1) first five hundred years: 500 – 0 BC, (2) the second period: AD 0 – 500, (3) the third period: AD 500 – 1000, and (4) the last one thousand years: AD 1000 – 1978. Following Conze's pattern, Perry Schmidt-Leukel<sup>121</sup> also described historical development in terms of five periods of roughly five hundred years each as (1) The Formative period (500 – 0 BC), (2) The Rise of *Mahāyāna* (0 – 500 C.E), (3) The Rise of *Tantric Buddhism* (500 – 1000 CE), (4) Decline and Consolidation (1000 – 1500 CE) and (5) *Buddhism* Encounters the West (1500 – 2000 CE). Similarly, Renuka Singh<sup>122</sup> mentioned four main periods of development in the history of *Buddhism* as: pre-classical, classical, medieval and modern. Drawing upon these three sources, time period of development in the history of *Buddhist* monasticism is divided here, for the convenience in dealing the topic, into five main periods as follows.

**5.1 Pre-classical or Formative period (500 – 0 BC)<sup>123</sup>** - It covers period from the lifetime of *Buddha* when his teaching and practice were consolidated to the time till first century AD when *Theravāda* school, and *Pāli* scriptures developed.

*Buddhist* monasticism originated with the life of *Śākyamuni Buddha* after his enlightenment. The *Buddha* ordained himself into the 'homeless life' by cutting off his hair and renouncing his wealth, family and claim to the throne in order to pursue the spiritual path full time. He ordained other followers as renunciates after his enlightenment. The prospective monastic would cut off their hair, renounce their worldly possessions and enter the community of '*Saṅgha*' and practice diligently to attain enlightenment.

After the formation of *Saṅgha* by the like minded followers of *Dharma*, monasticism grew faster, its pace marched further with the construction of numerous monasteries and formulation of monastic rules. The most important

<sup>120</sup> Edward Conze, *A Short History of Buddhism*, (New Delhi: Research Press, 1999)

<sup>121</sup> Schmidt-Leukel, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 78), Pp. 1- 10

<sup>122</sup> (i) Renuka Singh(Ed.), *The Path of the Buddha*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2004), P. xii.

(ii) G.D. Chryssides, *Exploring New Religions*, (London: Casell, 1999), P. 92

<sup>123</sup> Schmidt-Leukel, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 78), P. 1

practitioners of the *Buddhist* monasticism have been the monks and nuns who make up the *Buddhist Saṅgha* or ‘Community’. The first *Buddhist* council<sup>124</sup> held under the patronage of Venerable Mahākassapa about three months after *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of the *Buddha* provided strong ground and necessary codes for more systematic and organized *Buddhist* monasticism. He convened first council feeling the urgent need of compilation of words of the *Buddha* so that they could be preserved before they were distorted or misappropriated. Had he not done that the succeeding monasticism might have been affected severely. Therefore, convention of first *Buddhist* council was very important in the history of *Buddhist* monasticism. From approximately a hundred years after *Mahāparinirvāṇa*, certain differences arose in the *Saṅgha* in the matter of monasticism. The second *Buddhist* Council<sup>125</sup> held at that time for the settlement of disputes resulted in first splitting of the *Saṅgha* into orthodox *Sthaviravāda* and reformist *Mahāsāṃghikā*. Consequently, two different monasticisms emerged in *Buddhism*. Once, such schism came into play, it later gradually continued and led to the development of a number of monastic fraternities (*nikāyas*), each following a slightly different monastic code, and to different schools of thought (*vādas*). The *Mahāsāṃghikās* became the starting point of the development of the *Mahāyāna* by their more liberal attitude and by some of their special theories.<sup>126</sup>

By the time of Aśoka (274-232 B.C), there were at least eighteen such branches of *Buddhism* following separate monasticism. All those branches of the *Saṅgha* trace their origination - line back to one or other of the early fraternities; but of the early schools of thought, only that which became known as the *Theravāda* has continued to this day. Its name indicates that it purports to follow the teaching which is ‘ancient’ or ‘primordial’ (*therā*).

Geographically, this first period remained almost purely Indic. Once *Buddhist* monasticism spread in India, it gradually turned into a missionary zeal under the patronage of then *Buddhist* rulers. Aśoka (274-232 B.C.)’s contribution in the third century BC period became remarkable. He tried to purify, streamline and strengthen *Buddhism* by bringing uniformity in *Buddhist* monasticism with the help of his

<sup>124</sup> Bapat, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 115ii), P. 31

<sup>125</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 116), P. 32

<sup>126</sup> Edward Conze, *Buddhism: Its Essence and Development*, (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 1951, reprint 2005), P. 121

teacher Moggaliputtatissa.<sup>127</sup> They convened third *Buddhist* council<sup>128</sup> and expelled sixty thousand pseudo-monks from the *Saṅgha*. The type of monasticism they promoted is called *Vivajjāvādin*. Aśoka began campaigning of the *Buddha*'s message through missionaries sent to different regions in India and abroad. In this connection, he sent his son Mahindra and daughter Saṅghamitra to Srilanka to spread *Buddhism* and sent his another daughter, Cārumatī, through his second wife Tissarakṣita along with other group of monks under her to Kathmandu valley.<sup>129</sup> It was in Srilanka where *Theravāda* evolved from *Vivajjāvāda* form of *Buddhism*. Likewise, contribution of the Greek king of Bactria, Milinder between second to first century BC was also significant. The monasticism followed in this period is still mostly represented by *Theravādins* today. In earlier period, such school is represented also by the *Vaibhāṣika* and *Sautrāntika* systems of *Buddhist* tradition. These schools held the view that liberation is freedom from emotional upsets which are seen as the main cause of man's involvement in *Samsāra*. They believe only in *Buddhist Pāli* literature as the source of practices.

## 5.2 Classical Period (first to fifth century AD when *Mahāyāna*, *Buddhism* developed)

Around the beginning of the Christian era, a movement began which led to a new style of *Buddhism* known as the *Mahāyāna*, or 'Great Vehicle'. A single *Buddhist* fraternity can not be held responsible for the evolution of *Mahāyāna*, which brought a remarkable change in monasticism. Several factors have contributed to it. *Mahāyāna* has been more overtly innovative, so that for many centuries, *Mahāyānists* continued to compose new scriptures, mainly in *Sanskrit* language. The *Mahāyāna* is characterized, on the one hand, by *Bodhisattvas* (holy saviour beings)' ideals, on the other by several sophisticated philosophies, developed by extending the implications of the earlier teachings by the *ācāryas*.

The council, supposedly fourth one according to *Theravādin* view, held in Srilanka during the reign of the king Duttagamini Abhaya in the first century and the another council, again supposed to be the fourth one from *Mahāyānic* view, held under the

<sup>127</sup> Also known as Upagupta in later *Buddhism*.

<sup>128</sup> Bapat, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 115ii), P. 39

<sup>129</sup> Radhakumuda Mukharjee, *Aśoka*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasadass, 1974), Pp. 9 & 66

aegis of king Kaniṣka in Puruṣapura (now Peshāvar) both contributed in expansion of *Buddhism* from south and north respectively. The fourth council of Kaniṣka time which was the council of *Sarvāstivādins* proved to be turning point in giving rise to *Mahāyānic* form of monasticism by integrating several new elements while that of Duttagamini became helpful in strengthening further the *Theravādin* monasticism.

During the period, the Kuṣāna king, Kaniṣka (78 – 101 A.D.) played significant role in strengthening *Buddhist* monasticism. It was much due to his effort that *Buddhist* monasticism took a new turn by using *Sanskrit Buddhist* literature as inspirational source. The *Buddhist* council convened under the aegis of the king Kaniṣka and his association with a galaxy of *Buddhist* masters like Aśvaghōṣa, Pārsva, Vasumitra etc. had long lasting influence on then *Buddhist* monasticism which supported mostly *Sarvāstivādins*.<sup>130</sup>

In the course of time, in India and beyond, the *Mahāyāna* produced many schools with their characteristic monasticism. The goal of *Mahāyāna* monasticism is the attainment of Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings so as to enable them to find their path and goal. *Buddhist* monasticism, mainly *Mahāyāna* form became popular in many places such as all Central Asia, China, Mongolia, Korea and Japan as its tenets were deeply embedded in the local culture.

### 5.3 Semi classical Period- (from 5th to 10th AD.)

A new group, distinctively separate took shape from the *Mahāyāna*, by the sixth century in India. It was the *Vajrayāna*, also known as *Mantrayāna*, or the ‘*Mantra* vehicle’ (as incorporates *mantra*- a short magical verse) or *Guhayāna* (Secret Vehicle) or *Tantrayāna* (as it uses *tantra*- elaborated commentary in addition to sutras. Some scholars prefer to assign the period of origin of *Vajrayāna* before 5<sup>th</sup> century. *Vajrayāna* is almost the same as the *Mahāyāna* in its doctrines, but developed a range of powerful new methods to attain the goals of the *Mahāyāna*, such as the meditative repetitions of sacred words of power- *mantras* and complex visualization practices.<sup>131</sup> After the emergence of *Vajrayāna*, *Buddhist* monasticism

<sup>130</sup> Bapat, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 115ii), Pp. 92 & 176

<sup>131</sup> Peter Della Santina, *The Tree of Enlightenment*, (Taiwan: Chico Dharma Study Foundation, The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation, 1997), P. 199

saw varieties with the involvement of priestly functions of sacramental rites and magical activities of mystic realizers- the *Siddhās*. During this time, *Vajrayāna* spread northward from India to Nepal, Tibet and most of the countries of Central Asia like Kuchā, Khotān, Yāshgar etc. From China it entered Korea and Japan. Married monks were also seen in the monasticism. However, *Buddhism* had completely collapsed in the Central Asian region by the 7<sup>th</sup> Century CE, after Islamic penetration from Bactria and Parthia.<sup>132</sup>

In India, *Vajrayāna Buddhism* developed with a new trend in monasticism, monasteries developed into great learning centres like Nālandā, Vikramśīla Universities which produced a good number of learned *Buddhist* scholars. Many eminent *Buddhist* masters like Dignāg, Śāntideva, Śāntarakshita, Padmasambhava, Kamalaśīla, Ārya Deva, Virupā, and many more emerged and disseminated *Buddhist* teachings. Most of them became instrumental in spreading *Buddhist* monasticism to Tibet via Nepal. After 8<sup>th</sup> century the whole Indian *Buddhist* monasticism existed in various Buddhist traditions transformed into *Vajrayāna* form of *Mahāyāna* which lasted till its collapse in 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>133</sup> On the other hand, it continued in the lands of Nepal and Tibet.

In Japan, *Buddhism* has existed alongside the indigenous nature-oriented religion of *Shinto*, and the Confucianism diffused from China. Traditionally, people would be married by *Shinto* rites and buried with *Buddhist* ones.<sup>134</sup> Later, the lay-monastic distinction gradually diminished in importance attracting more lay followers. In the ninth century, Saicho introduced a less strict monastic code for Tendai monks, and unconventional holy men known as *hijiri* started to leave off their monastic robes and ignore rules against meat-eating while spreading *Buddhism* among the common people.<sup>135</sup> Such reformations appeared in this period continued to later period too.

---

<sup>132</sup> Thapa 2008, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 103), P. 1

<sup>133</sup> Swāmi Dwārikādās Śāstri, *Guhyasamājtantra* or *Tathāgataguhyaka*, (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2003), P. 7

<sup>134</sup> Harvey, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 76), P. 5

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid*, P. 219

#### 5.4 Medieval Period- (10th – 18th AD)

In this period, *Buddhism* went on adjusting its monasticism with other regional religions accustoming with new surroundings. It concentrated on the essentials of spiritual development proving its ability to co-exist with both other major religions and popular folk traditions which catered for people's desire for a variety of rituals. *Buddhism* has been very good at adapting to different cultures while guarding its own tenets by a critical tolerance of other tradition. Its style has been to offer invitation to several levels of spiritual practice for those who have been ready to commit themselves. In Southern *Buddhist* lands, worship of pre-*Buddhist* nature gods has been incorporated. In Srilankan monasticism *Buddhists* often worship gods whose cults are indigenous or Indian in origin. Most *Buddhists* would not see this as a betrayal of *Buddhism*, but just an attempt to interact with minor powers of the cosmos for some worldly advantage. In Northern *Buddhism*, a similar relationship exists with the indigenous Bon religion of Tibet. In China, Taiwan, Korea and Vietnam, *Buddhism* has co-existed with Confucianism-more a system of social philosophy than a religion, the Taoist religion, and much folk religion. Some scholars prefer to call it syncretism of two or more religious traditions. Pālā rulers of Bengāl in India supported *Vajrayāna Buddhism* to such an extent that *Vajrayānic* monasticism saw highest development in their period. They helped spread of *Buddhism* even to South east Asia, notably Burma, Java, Indonesia.<sup>136</sup>

In the thirteenth century, *Shinrān* introduced a married priesthood in its monasticism to the Jodo-shin school, setting a precedent that monks of other schools sometimes followed.<sup>137</sup> From this period, Japanese *Buddhism* also came to develop a more this-worldly orientation, which generally saw ultimate reality as pervading everyday activities.

However, it is ironical that during the course of time in this period, *Buddhism* could not survive even in the country of its origin, India after 14<sup>th</sup> century C.E. *Tantric Buddhist* monasticism flourished to its fullest with the liberal patronage of Pālā rulers of Bengāl- the last adobe of *Buddhism* in India where it stayed for a comparatively long period before it had finally left for the neighbouring countries like Nepal, Tibet, and China.

---

<sup>136</sup> Gayatri Sen Majumdar, *Buddhism in Ancient Bengal*, (Calcutta: Navana, 1983), Pp. 69-79

<sup>137</sup> Chen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 93), Pp. 1-7



### 5.5 Modern Period – (the last 200 years)

Due to development of western colonization in Asia, which reached its climax during the nineteenth century, *Buddhist* monasticism came to encounter with the West. Srilanka, Burma, and most of the parts of India were colonized by the British. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia fell upon the control of France. Along with Britain and France, then powerful countries like Portugal, Germany and Russia controlled parts of China. Japan followed the western example and established colonial rule in Korea and parts of China. As a result, *Buddhist* monasticism spread with further process of adjustment, acclimatization and reformation. Where *Buddhism* has survived, it has adapted various regional features and amalgamated with them.

*Buddhist* monasticism is also taking new turn in Modern times as it is being practised by living within the secular world with the right attitude, be this a devout faith in Amitabha, a Nichiren-inspired urge to purify society, or a *Zen* approach of giving oneself wholly over to the task at hand or any other type. Adherents of other faith are also joining *Buddhism*. *Buddhism* became more lay-oriented, with devotion mainly focused before a home altar, rather than at a temple or monastery. This will certainly move towards evolution of entirely new form of monasticism in future. After the Meiji restoration of 1868 in Japan, the Japanese Government lifted the legal sanctions against marriage for *Buddhist* monks.<sup>138</sup> The government decreed that monks of all schools could marry<sup>139</sup>, and this has been taken up to such an extent that genuine (celibate) monks are now mostly young men in training. Popular urban lay movements known as ‘New Religions’ have little need for priests or monks. In Korea also, some ‘monks’ were married, but this trend increased rapidly during the Japanese occupation (1904-45), due to attempts to Japanize Korean life.<sup>140</sup> So, a large proportion of the male clergy remain married. In Nepal, *Newār Buddhist* monasticism is already dominated by married householder monks.

---

<sup>138</sup> Helen J. Baroni, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Zen Buddhism*, (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group Inc., 2002), P. 217.

<sup>139</sup> Harvey, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 76), P. 219

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, P. 220

*Buddhism* proliferated all over Asia and made inroads throughout the world. In the twentieth century it made its presence felt in every country of the world.<sup>141</sup> In modern times, *Buddhism* and its associated monasticism came to be known according to regional identities basically attached to a particular country, society or race such as Chinese *Buddhism*, Japanese *Buddhism*, *Newār Buddhism* and so forth instead of identifying it on the basis of different philosophies like *Sautrāntika*, *Mahāyāna*, *Theravāda* etc. In other words, *Buddhism* is known through the territorial location and is also broadly categorized as Northern *Buddhism* and Southern *Buddhism*. Followers of Northern *Buddhism* are from the northern part of the Asia including Nepal, Tibet, China, Taiwan, Mongolia, Korea, Japan and some Russian Republics (mainly Buryatia and Kalmykia) where as those of Southern *Buddhism* from the southern part including Srilanka, Myanmar, Thailand etc. In China (which now includes Tibet), Mongolia, regions of the Soviet Union, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, *Buddhism* now exists under Communist governments which do not favour religion.<sup>142</sup> After the diaspora of Tibetan *Buddhists* resulted from Chinese annexation of Tibet, *Buddhism* is spreading beyond Asia and gaining popularity in USA and Europe.

*Buddhism* is regarded as a world religion in the sense that it has been able to adapt itself to a variety of social systems.<sup>143</sup> It has reached USA and Europe by the turn of this century. Today it has become a religion practiced in the Western world too with establishment of *Buddhist* institutions, though comparatively few. Even in India and Indonesia, countries in which *Buddhism* long seemed extinct, *Buddhist* monks and monasteries have again appeared.<sup>144</sup>

---

<sup>141</sup> Schmidt-Leukel, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 78), P. 1

<sup>142</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P.5

<sup>143</sup> Heinz Bechert, "Forword" in Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich(ed)., *Buddhism, Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, (London: Thames and Hudson Ltd, 1984), P. 7

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid*,

## CHAPTER VI

### ***Buddhist Monasticism and its components in Nepal-maṇḍala***

Monasticism comprises of the activities exercised and exhibited by the *Saṅgha* members in a monastery towards the practice and propagation of the *Dharma*. Nepalese *Buddhists* also had followed the same age-old tradition of monasticism conceived and adopted by the early *Buddhist* practitioners/monks. Certain characteristics of monasticism have tacitly been established in due course time. It has been already discussed in earlier chapter that if these characteristics are met, one can say there is monasticism. Monastery, Triple gems with functional *Saṅgha*, monks, rules of governance or *Vinaya* or commitments, regular councils are customary machineries of Monasticism. Existence of numerous old monasteries is the indicative of the fact that Kathmandu valley is the strong hold of the *Buddhists*. *Buddhists* masters, monks and *ācāryas* mostly dwell in the monastery or its surrounding. They preach *Dharma* discourse, teach *Dharma* lessons and provide guidance to the lay followers. The lay followers throng into the nearby monastery for earning merit by listening to them, worshipping the *Buddhist* deities etc.

The monastery is also the centre of *Dharma* practice by the fully ordained *Buddhist* initiates, their socio-cultural accomplishments and teaching learning activities. All these chores along with monasteries concerned make up monasticism. So, the monastery occupies vital pivoted position in the *Buddhist* tradition with the formation of *Saṅgha* besides its use as lodging for *Buddhist* masters, place for socio-cultural activities and spiritual practice. *Saṅgha* members are made at the monastery by conferring ordination to the aspirant practitioners. The *Saṅgha* members are bound to the monastery and the *dharma* by their commitments and certain laws or rules or *Vinaya*. Monastery also houses all requisites including *Buddha* images for *dharma* practice. It also acts as venue of regular convention or councils. So, functional *Saṅgha* is vital to the monasticism.

All above mentioned components or machineries are intact in the monasticism of Nepal.<sup>145</sup> So, it is baseless to say that there is no monasticism in Nepal. As already mentioned, monasticism is present wherever *Buddhism* has existed. Nepal is no exception. Nevertheless, there are some variations mandated by their driving scriptures, philosophy and local people. Though the machineries of *Buddhist* monasticism are same, some variations noticed in Nepalese monasticism are as follows.

### 6.1 Triple gems:

Triple gems are the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *Saṅgha*. This is called *Tri-ratna* (*Saṅskrit*) in Nepal. It is a very popular term here in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. So, there are a number of *Buddhist* people<sup>146</sup> named *Tri-ratna* attesting this popularity. Before beginning any work, the people make salutation to Triple gems and say *Tri ratna saranam* which means taking refuge with Triple gems or say *Namo ratna trayāye* saluting Triple Jewels. Every *Buddhist* household in Kathmandu has at least a *Buddha* image which can be either in the form of stone sculpture or metal or wooden images or painting (*Paubhā* or *Thāṅkā*) or *caitya*. Monastery compulsorily has many icons of *Tri-ratna*. Triple gems are also shown in anthropomorphic forms- The *Buddha* by any iconic form of *Buddha*, *Dharma* by the figure of *Prajñāpārāmitā* *Devi* and the *Saṅgha* by image of *Ṣaḍkṣeri* *Lokeśwara*. *Buddha* image is always flanked by *Prajñāpārāmitā* and *Ṣaḍkṣeri* *Lokeśwara* to denote to Triple gems. There is also a practice of representing triple gems in the form of three *maṇḍala* i.e. *Buddha maṇḍala*, *Dharma maṇḍala* and *Saṅgha maṇḍala* which are widely used in rituals and arts. In the Nepalese monastic tradition, *Buddha* is envisioned as *Ādi-guru*, *Dharma* as way to *Nirvāṇa* and *Saṅgha* as the representation of the *Buddha*.

#### 6.1.1 The *Buddha*:

By the word *Buddha*, it usually means historical *Śākyamuni Buddha* born in Lumbini of Southern Nepal in 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The birth year is generally taken as 573 B.C. But, *Śākyamuni Buddha* is not the only *Buddha* revered and worshipped

<sup>145</sup> Please see Chapter IV in sub heading 'The components of Monasticism'

<sup>146</sup> As an example, the current Vice Chancellor of Lumbini Buddhist University is Prof. Dr. Triratna Manandhar

in Nepal. *Pañca-Buddha* and *Saptatathāgata Buddhas* (seven *Buddhas*) and *Dīpaṅkar Buddha* are among other popular *Buddhas* besides *Śākyamuni Buddha* in Nepal.

#### 6.1.1.1 *Pañca-Buddha*

*Pañca-Buddha* is a group of five *Buddhas* sometimes also known as *Dhyāni Buddhas* (meaning meditating *Buddhas*) in sitting position. This is the most remarkable and unique feature of *Buddhism* of Nepal. Five *Buddhas* in *Pañca-Buddha* are *Vairocan*, *Akṣobhya*, *Ratnasambhava*, *Amitābha* and *Amoghsiddhi*. These are not human *Buddhas* like *Śākyamuni*. They are symbolic figuration representing the *Bodhi-jnāna* (transcendental knowledge of enlightenment), created through contemplative visualization. Each *Buddha* of *pañca Buddha* is linked to a form of *Bodhi-jnāna* (knowledge)-*Vairocan* to *Subiśuddha-dharmadhātu-jnāna*, *Akṣobhya* to *Ādarśa jnāna* (Mirror like knowledge), *Amitābha* is linked to *Pratyavekṣana jnāna* (Knowledge of discrimination), *Ratnasambhava* to *Samatā jnāna* (knowledge of equality), and *Amoghsiddhi* to *Kṛtyānuṣṭhāna jnāna* (knowledge of accomplishment).<sup>147</sup> In fact, *Pañca-Buddha* represents doctrinal body of the *Buddha*<sup>148</sup> and aggregated form of *Pañca-Buddha* is *Vajradhara* or *Vajrasattva* which is the embodiment of Buddhahood. So, *Buddha* nature and qualities can be understood by knowing the *Pañca-Buddha*. All the five *Buddhas* of *Pañca-Buddha*, *Vajradhara* and *Vajrasattva* may represent the *Buddha* of Triple gems in place of human *Buddhas* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Sometimes, *Pañca Buddha* are shown with *Śaktīs* (female partner) which are peculiar to Nepal.<sup>149</sup> *Vairocan* is associated with *Vajra-Dhāteśvarī*, *Akṣobhya* with *Locanī*, *Ratnasambhava* with *Māmakī*, and *Amitābha* with *Pāndurā* and *Amoghsiddhi* with *Tārā* respectively. *Pañca-Buddha* cult is in practice in Nepal from the ancient time. People of Nepal honour, worship and remember *Pañca-Buddha* more than *Śākyamuni Buddha*. It clearly shows that more importance is given to the qualities of the *Buddha* than to the individual human *Buddha*. When some auspicious action is carried out, figure of *Pañca-Buddha* is painted in the entrance gate or front walls of the building of the doer. If we see the existing *vihāras* and *Mahāvihāras* (*Bāhā* & *Bahī*) of Kathmandu valley, we find the main deity or *kwā pā dyo* of the shrine to be one

<sup>147</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 30), P. 10

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid*, P. kha

<sup>149</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 59

from *Pañca-Buddha*. Similarly, most of the Stupas and *Caityas* contain *Pañca-Buddha* in four cardinal point-*Vairocana* in centre, *Akṣobhya* in the east, *Ratnasambhava* in the south, *Amitābha* in the west, and *Amoghsiddhi* in the North. Seniormost elders and the ritual performing *Vajrācāryas* wear a special crown of *Pañca-Buddha* called ‘*Mukha*’ during religious ceremonies. *Navadān* (alms of nine varieties) is observed in presence of image of *Amitabha Buddha*.<sup>150</sup> In rituals and *Buddhist art*, the *Buddha* is shown through *Buddha-maṇḍala*. The set of dieties for *Buddha-maṇḍala* are the *Pañca-Buddha* and four *Tārās*<sup>151</sup> (*Locanī*, *Māmaki*, *Pāndurā*, and *Ārya Tārā*). Among 28 human *Buddhas* from *Saraṅkar* to *Śākyamuni Buddha* who arose in the earth, *Dīpaṅkar* and *Saptatathāgata* are other popular *Buddhas* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.<sup>152</sup>

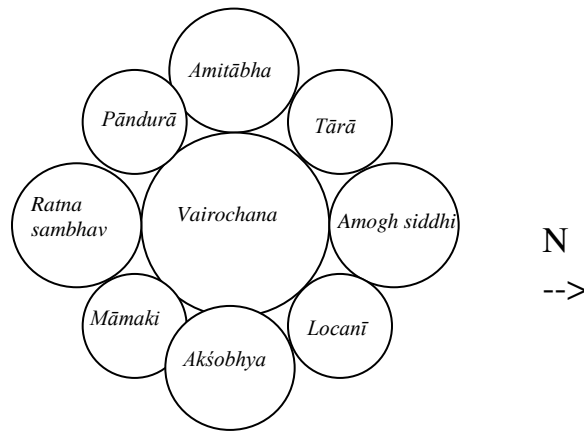


Figure 3. *Buddha-maṇḍala* (diagrammatic)

#### 6.1.1.2 *Dīpaṅkar Buddha*

*Dīpaṅkar* is the earlier Human *Buddha* widely held in esteem in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.<sup>153</sup> He is listed in *Buddhavaṃśa* and *Durenidān* of *Tipitaka*, as the 4<sup>th</sup> one among 28 *Buddhas* that arose in the Universe. Present *Śākyamuni Buddha* made his first aspiration (*Bodhisattva caryā praṇidhān*) for Buddhahood to be *Buddha* in future in front of him when he was *Sumedha ṛṣi* (ascetic). According to *Mahāvaṃśa*

<sup>150</sup> Karunakar Vaidya, *Buddhist Traditions and Culture of the Kathmandu Valley (Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan, 1986), P. 86

<sup>151</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 191; Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 168; Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 222

<sup>152</sup> (i) M.S Bhat (Dr) and M.V. Talim(Dr) - *Suttapitake-Khuddhaknikāya BUDDHAVANSO*, The Genealogy of the *Buddhas*, (Bombay: University of Bombay, 1969)

(ii) Dhammavati (Anagarika), *Saṅkṣipta Buddha Vanśa*, (A Short Buddha Dynasty), Part I & II, (Kathmandu, Dharma Kirti Baudha Adhyayana Gosthi, 1997)

<sup>153</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P.180

*Buddhist* prototype, tradition of venerating *Dīpaṅkar Buddha* existed as foremost when remembering past *Buddhas*. Nepalese monasticism must have followed the same. There is a tradition of making offering (generous donation or giving) in presence of *Dīpaṅkar Buddha*. Such occasions are called *Pañca-dān*, *Navadān* or *Nadān*, and *Samyak Festival*. ‘*Dān*’ or charity is considered a very meritorious act and is believed to be in practice from the time of *Dīpaṅkar Buddha* and King Sarvānanda of Dipāvati city. The king initiated such ceremony like *Samyak dān* inviting *Dīpaṅkar Buddha*. The principal institutional practice of alms giving to the monastic community is observed during the festival of *Pañcadān* which is based upon inspiring stories of *Pindapātravadān*, *Kapisāvadān*, *Vesāntara Jātaka* etc. The festival is annually celebrated in the month of August but is sometimes optionally conducted any auspicious time as per the wish of the interested donor. *Navadān* is almost similar to *Pañcadān* but it is not regularly occurring event and optional one in which nine articles are given away in charity. However, preferable time for its observance is on the day of *Juga Navami*, in the month of *Śrāvan* (August). *Samyak* is an elaborate version of *Pañca-dān* which is compulsorily celebrated once in 12 years in presence of the head of the state (previously the king) in Kathmandu, in the interval of every four years in Lalitpur and annually in Bhaktapur. However, interested rich and generous donors can optionally hold *Samyak Dān* any time. The organizers of optional *Samyak* must necessarily make the image of *Dīpaṅkar Buddha*. *Samyak* and *Pañcadān* can be called as the festival of *Dīpaṅkars*. During *Samyak* event, all the *Dīpaṅkar* images of the valley are displayed at one place and worshipped along with the event of *dāna* offering. *Pañcadān* and *Samyak* festivals are known as parts of ‘*The Cult of Dīpaṅkara*’ still prevalent in Nepal.

#### 6.1.1.3 *Saptatathāgata*

*Saptatathāgata* means seven mortal *Buddhas* that came upon earth in the later phase in the chronological order of the emergence of 28 human *Buddha* according to *Buddhavamsā*<sup>154</sup> of *Tripitaka*. They are *Vipaśvī*, *Śikhī*, *Viśvabhu*, *Krakucchanda*, *Kanakmuni*, *Kāśyapa*, and *Śākyamuni*. The *Saptatathagata* is highlighted in *Svayambhū purāṇa*, according to which they individually visited and propagated *dharma* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. It is understandable that they bear special importance to

<sup>154</sup> *BuddhaVamsā, Op.cit.* (f.n. 152)

*Newār Buddhists* as they were known to have visited Nepal and displayed some of their activities as mentioned in *Svayambhū purāṇa*.

Name of Buddha	Eon	Came from the city	Main deed in <i>Nepal-maṇḍala</i>	Stayed at hill Named	Remark
<i>Vipaśvī</i>	<i>Satyayug</i>	Vandhumati	Sowed in the lake, a seed of Lotus from which <i>Svayambhū</i> appeared	Jamācho/ Jatamātrocca, now Nāgarjun hill	Day of event (fair) on <i>Lhuti Punhi</i>
<i>Śikhī</i>	<i>Satyayug</i>	Aruṇāpuri	Attracted and absorbed into <i>Svayambhū</i>	<i>Dhyānācho/ Dhemācva/ Champāvati</i>	Day of event (fair) on <i>Kati Punhi</i>
<i>Viśvabhu</i>	<i>Tretāyug</i>	Anupam	Offered flowers to <i>Svayambhū</i> . His meditation causes an earthquake, he predicted the coming of <i>Manjusri</i>	<i>Phulacho/ Phucva/ Phulchoki</i>	Day of event (fair) on <i>Lhuti Punhi</i>
<i>Krakucchanda</i>	<i>Tretāyug</i>	Kṣemāvati	Initiated monasticism ordaining monks; created Bāgmati and Visnumati rivers	<i>Siphucho/ Siddhiphulocva/ Śivapuri</i>	Day of event (fair) on <i>Lhuti Punhi</i> Pillar inscription of Aśoka in Gotihawā
<i>Kanakmuni</i>	<i>Dwāparyug</i>	Śobhāvati	Visited <i>Svayambhū</i>	<i>Svayambhū</i> hill/ <i>Vajrakutaparvat</i>	Inscription Aśoka and stupa in Niglihawā
<i>Kaśyāpa</i>	<i>Dwāparyug</i>	Varāṇasi	Taught Prachanda-deva, who became Śāntikar ācārya who covered the <i>Svayambhū</i> light	<i>Svayambhū</i> hill/ <i>Goshringparvat</i>	<i>Boudhanāth</i> believed to have enshrined his relics
<i>Śākyamuni</i>	<i>Kaliyug</i>	Kapilavastu	Visited <i>Nepal-maṇḍala</i> paying obeisance to <i>Svayambhū</i> , <i>Guhyeśwari</i> and <i>Namo Buddha</i>	<i>Svayambhū</i> hill/ <i>Gopuccagiriparvat</i>	Day of event (fair) on <i>Vaiśak Punhi</i> ( <i>Swāyā Punhi</i> )

Table 1. showing short details on *Saptatathāgata* according to *Svayambhū purāṇa*.



Origin of *Ādi Buddha* (primordial *Buddha*) or the *Svayambhū* (the self sprouted one), which stands as the epitome of *Newār Buddhism* and the valley, *Nepal-maṇḍala* is connected to *Saptatathagata*.

Furthermore, it is believed that Nepal is the home land of not only *Śākyamuni Buddha* but also of *Krakucchanda Buddha* and *Kanakmuni Buddha*, the two among *Sapta* (seven) *Tathāgatas*.<sup>155</sup> *Gotihawā* and *Niglihawā* of Southern Nepal are believed to be birth place of *Krakucchanda Buddha* and *Kanakmuni Buddha* respectively. As a tradition, *Saptatathāgata Buddhas* were also painted at some *vihāras* and the doors of the houses of Nepalese *Buddhists*.<sup>156</sup> The names of the seven *Buddhas* of *Saptatathāgata* mentioned in the *purāṇa* are concomitant with *Buddhavamśa* in chronological order as the last seven among 28 *Buddhas* listed.

Besides, there are other forms of *Buddhas* like *Nāmasangiti*, *Vajradhara*, or *Vajrasattva* etc. They may also be used as the *Buddha* of *Tri-ratna* in the monasteries of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Therefore, the *Buddha* of triple gems in *Nepal-maṇḍala* may be any of above mentioned *Buddhas* either from Celestial or doctrinal *Buddhas* or from human *Buddhas*, and not always *Śākyamuni Buddha* as in *Theravāda* tradition. However, *Buddha-maṇḍala* which is ritually and artistically applied in *Nepal-maṇḍala* consists of only *Pañca-Buddha*.

<sup>155</sup> (i) Naresh Man Bajracharya, *Buddhism in Nepal*, (Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1998), P.129

(ii) Min Bahadur Shakya, *A short History of Buddhism in Nepal*, (Lalitpur: YMBA, 1986), P.01

<sup>156</sup> Bhikṣu Sudarshan Mahasthavir, translated into Nepali by Dharmaratna Shakya “Trishuli”. *Viśwomā Buddha Dharma*, (Kathmandu: Dharmaratna Shakya “Trishuli”, 2053), P.4

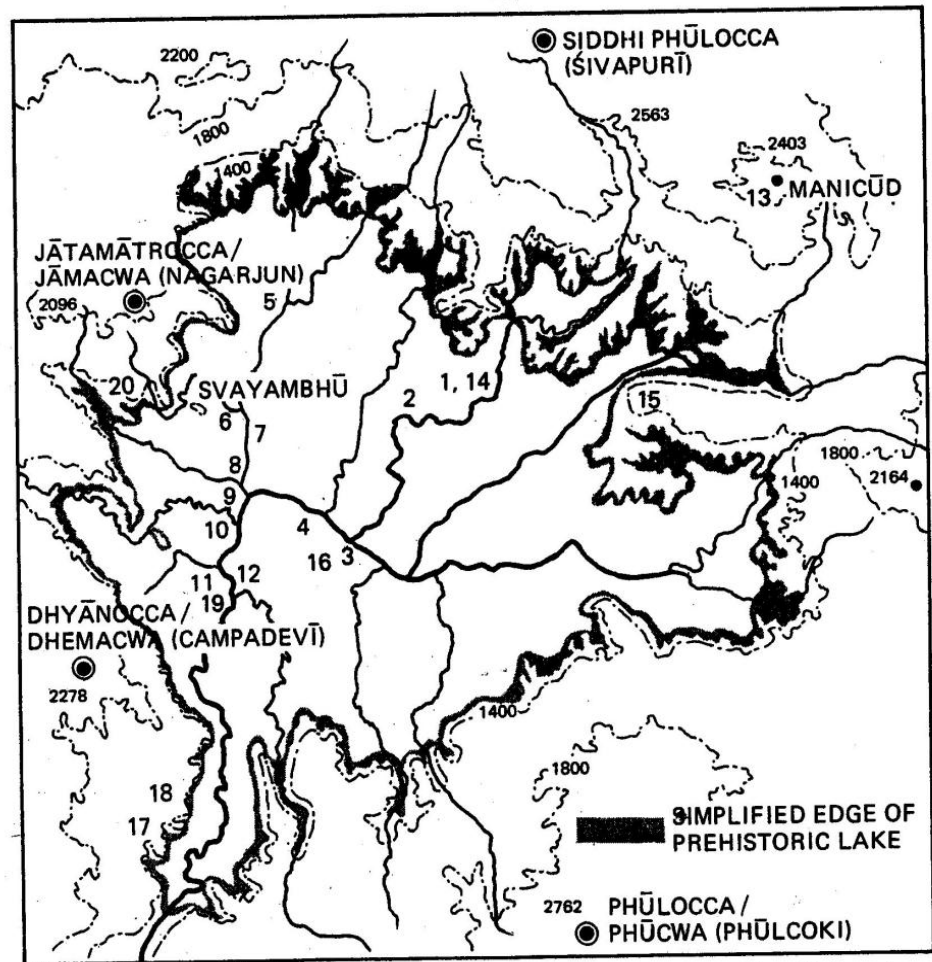


Figure 2. A map showing four surrounding mountains of *Nepal-maṇḍala* (Source: David N. Gellner, *Monk, Householder, and Tantric Priest*, New Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 1993, P. 194)

### 6.1.2 The Dharma

*Buddhist* teachings are regarded as *Dharma* and these are contained in *Buddhist* scriptures. True *dharma* is discerned by understanding the contents and essence of *Buddhist* scriptures. So, *Buddhist* scriptures are considered as the *Dharma*. For the same reason the whole range of *Tripitaka* (*Sūtra Piṭaka*, *Vinaya Piṭaka* and *Abhidharma Piṭaka*), the holy *Buddhist* scriptures is regarded as *Dharma*. Similarly, in Nepal, there are nine holy texts- *Prajñāpārāmīta sūtra*, *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka sūtra*, *Lalitavistara sūtra*, *Gandavyūha sūtra*, *Lankāvatara*

*sūtra*, *Suvarṇapravāsa sūtra*, *Samādhirāja Sūtra*, *Daśabhūmika sūtra*, and *Tathāgataguhyak*, taken as the *Dharma*. They are called *navavaipulya sūtras* which are even worshipped in Nepalese monasticism. Among these nine texts, *Aṣṭa Sāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā* is the most important and is of philosophical type while the rest eight are of the narrative kind.<sup>157</sup> These nine scriptures represent of *Dharma*. Therefore, *Dharma-maṇḍala* is shown to consist of these nine holy scriptures.<sup>158</sup>

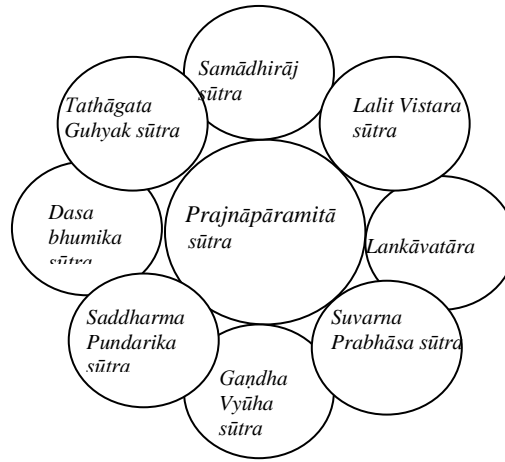


Figure 4. *Dharma-maṇḍala* (diagrammatic)

Monastery and the practitioners possess at least some *Buddhist* texts (*Dharma*) written either in *Saṅskrit* (mainly any or all of *Navagrantha sūtras*) or in translated local vernacular *Newārī*. *Dharma* does not have any form, but is all pervasive. This is regarded as *Dharmakāya*, the doctrinal body of the *Buddha* which is also considered to be *Ādi-Buddha* in Nepalese context. *Ādi-Buddha* is also understood as *Svayambhū* or *Dharmadhātu*, the self originated one with no beginning and no end. But, for depiction of *dharma* of triple gems, it is personified and presented in the form of *Prajñāpāramitā Devi*, female goddess. Iconographically, she is shown with four arms, one of which holds a scripture. It makes clear that in Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism, there is complete representation of the Triple gems- the *Buddha*, the *dharma* and the *Saṅgha*.

<sup>157</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 49

<sup>158</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 191; Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 168; Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 222

### 6.1.3 *Saṅgha*

It is the third one among Triple gems. There is strong persistent presence of *Saṅgha* which is the backbone of *Buddhist* monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala* as it is in every *Buddhist* tradition. Every monastery has a *Saṅgha* or is associated with a common *Saṅgha*. The local *Buddhists* are associated with any of the *Saṅgha* of *Buddhist* monasteries either as a member or *Upāsaka* or *Upāsikā* (*Jajamān* in local language). Veneration to *Saṅgha* is also shown by worshipping *Lokeśwara* or celestial *Bodhisattvas* especially the nine *Bodhisattvas*<sup>159</sup> which are regarded as symbolic representation of *Saṅgha* called *Ārya Saṅgha*. Being under *Mahāyānic* form, the *Bodhisattva* practices are given a high respect and status in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

There are two types of *Bodhisattvas*- (1) Celestial *Bodhisattva* or *Lokeśwara* and (2) *Mānuṣi* (Human) *Bodhisattva*. *Lokeśwara* are also the supremely enlightened ones as the *Buddha* but have refused personal liberation for benefiting others. Mortal (*Mānuṣi*) *Bodhisattvas* are those *Buddhist* practitioners who aspire to attain Buddhahood by generation of *bodhicitta*<sup>160</sup> to benefit others. The word *Bodhisattva* is ideally referred as a realized being and the work done out of compassion for the benefit of all sentient beings is called *Bodhisattva* practice. There are innumerable stories and legends of *Bodhisattva* practices described in *Pāli* and *Saṅskrit* literature. Among the chief *Bodhisattvas*, the eight stand prominent and known as *Aṣṭa Bodhisattva*. They are *Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī*, *Vajrapāṇī*, *Maitreya*, *Gaganaganja*, *Samantabhadra*, *Ākāśagarbha*, *Sarvanivaranaviskāmbi* and *Kṣitigarbha*. Besides, these eight popular *Bodhisattvas*, one more, *Avlokiteśwara* is added to make a group of nine *Bodhisattvas* which make up *Saṅghamaṇḍala*.<sup>161</sup> All the devotional practices concerning these *Bodhisattvas* have been the main stream of *Mahāyāna Buddhist* monasticism. This includes the devotional practices concerning the life span, eradication of diseases, elimination of untimely death, acquisition of an offspring and other worldly goals too.

<sup>159</sup> The nine *Bodhisattvas* included in *Āryasaṅgha* are *Āryavalokiteśvara*, *Maitreya*, *Manjughosha* (or *Manjushree*), *Gaganganj*, *Samantabhadra*, *Vajrapāṇi*, *Kṣitigarbha*, *Khagarbha* (or *Ākāśagarbha*), *Sarvanivaranaviskāmbhi*

<sup>160</sup> *Bodhicitta* is a highly compassionate mind.

<sup>161</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 191; Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 168; Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 222

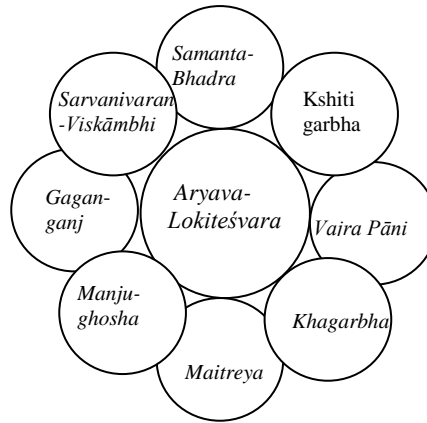


Figure 5. *Saṅgha-maṇḍala* (Diagrammatic)

There is a separate old tradition of ‘*Lokeśwara* cult’ in Nepalese *Buddhism*. *Lokeśwara* as mentioned above are the *Bodhisattvas* having immeasurable compassion for all sentient beings. From the history of Nepal, it can be assured that *Lokeśwara* cult was prevalent in Nepal from ancient time. *Lichchavī* inscriptions help to testify this fact. Reference to installation of two images of *Lokeśwara* (*Dharmarāja Lokeśwara* and *Yamantaka Lokeśwara*) by the *Lichchavī* King Vrsadeva (350-390AD) is mentioned in Wright genealogy.<sup>162</sup> An inscription of Mānadeva (464 – 506AD) found in Yāgabahāla in Patan showed that a devotee named Hun Dharmajiva erected a massive stone image of an *Avalokiteśwara*.<sup>163</sup> Another inscription of around 550 AD (approx) tells about establishment of an image of *Avlokiteśwara* at Lagantol, Kathmandu by Manigupta and his wife Mahendramati. Another inscription of 557 AD about the installation of *Avalokiteśwara* at Brahmatol, Kathmandu and the next one at Bandāhiti, Kathmandu also support the popularity of *Lokeśwara* cult in Nepal since ancient time.<sup>164</sup> There are images of twelve *Lokeśwaras* around the central *Svayambhū caitya* at *Hiraṇyavarṇa Mahāvihār* of Lalitpur. Bennoyatesh Bhattacharya had mentioned about 15 *Lokeśwaras* only in his book *Indian Buddhist Iconography*.<sup>165</sup> In Nepal, some 360 *Lokeśwaras* are known and named.<sup>166</sup> The number could be

<sup>162</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 155i), P.19

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid*, P.23

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*, P.24

<sup>165</sup> Bennoyatesh Bhattacharya, *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, (Calcutta: K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1968, Reprint 1987), Pp.124-144

<sup>166</sup> Munindra Ratna Bajracharya, *Nepal's Four Famous Karuṇāmaya Lokeśwor*, (Kathmandu: Padma Harsha Bajracharya, 2002), P.3

much more being the subject of investigation. *Lokeśwaras* are believed to exist in one thousand eight forms.<sup>167</sup> Some 108 *Lokeśwara* are displayed at *Kanak Caitya Mahāvihāra* (*Jana Bāhā*) in the form of brass repousse images and framed paintings. The *Lokeśwaras* come under *Saṅgha* category of the *Buddhist* triple gem; *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha* according to *Mahāyāna/Vajrayāna* pantheon. Some of the popularly known *Lokeśwara* are *Maitreya Boddhisattva*, *Gaganganj Boddhisattva*, *Samantabhadra Boddhisattva*, *Vajrapāṇī Bodhisattva*, *Manjusree Bodhisattva*, *Sarvanivarāṇa Viśkāmī Bodhisattva*, *Kṣitigarbha Bodhisattva*, and *Khagarbha Bodhisattva* associated with their sites of abode – *Manlingeśwara* at *Sāṅkhu*, *Gokaṇṇeśwara* at *Gokarna*, *Kileśwara* at *Chāngu Nārāyan Hill*, *Kumbheśwara* at *Konti*, *Lalitpur*, *Gopāleśwara* at *Pharpi*, *Phanikeśwara* at *Śeṣ Nārāyansthān*, *Pharpi*, *Gandheśwara* at *Chovār* and *Vikrameśwara* behind *Svayambhū Hill* respectively.<sup>168</sup> These eight places are known as famous eight holy pilgrimage sites, *Aṣṭa vaitarāga*<sup>169</sup> in *Nepal-maṇḍala* and *Lokeśwara* concerned are taken as members of *Saṅghamaṇḍala*. The *Lokeśwara* are synonymously known as *Karuṇāmaya*. The *Karuṇāmaya* is commonly recognized as *Avalokiteśwara*. Four forms of *Avalokiteśwars*, widely worshipped and most popularly known in *Nepal* are *Buṅgamā Lokeśwara* (*Padmapāṇī*) or *Rāto Matchendranāth*, *Amoghapās Lokeśwara* or *Seto Matchendranāth*, *Ānandādi Lokeśwara* and *Śṛīstikāntā Lokeśwara*.

The shrines of these four *Karuṇāmayas* are situated in four adjoining sub districts of *Kathmandu*, *Rāto Matchendranāth* in *Lalitpur*, *Seto Matchendranāth* in *Kathmandu proper*, *Ānandādi* in *Kīrtipur* and *Śṛīstikāntā Lokeśwara* in *Nālā*, *Banepa*. Each location of these *Karuṇāmayas* is in serene, beautiful place full of religious atmosphere and is well known pilgrimage site. Annual bathing

---

For details, also see: Amogh Bajra Bajracharya, *Lokeśworyā Parichaya* (*Introduction to Lokeśwor*), (Kathmandu: Lokeśwor Saṅgha, N.S. 1999)

<sup>167</sup> Sucho Takaoka, a Japanese monk scholar collected postures of about 700 iconographically different Lokeswars from Nepal

<sup>168</sup> Vaidya 1986, *Op.cit.* (f.n 150), P.250

<sup>169</sup> (i) Min Bahadur Shakya, and Shantaharsha Bajracharya(Tr.), *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, (Lalitpur: Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, 2001 A.D)

(ii) Badriratna Bajracharya, *Śṛī Swayambhū Mahāpurāṇa*, (Kathmandu: Sanumaya Tuladhar, 1103 N.S), Pp. 41-111

ceremonies of these four *Karuṇāmayas* and chariot pulling festival of *Rāto Matchendranāth* and *Seto Matchendranāth Lokeśwara* are celebrated gaily.

Some monasteries like *Tanga bāhā* has *Jatādhāri Lokeśwara*, *Cukabāhā* and *Sibāhā* of Lalitpur have *Ratnapāni Bodhisattva* as *kwā pā dyo* (the main deity). Similarly, *Jamo Bāhā* of Kathmandu has *Maitreya bodhisattva* as *Kwā pā dyo*. The practices of observing *Upoṣadhavrata*, *Saptavidhānuttara pūja* (sevenfold worship) and other rituals in the sacred sites such as *Svayambhū*, *Jana bāhā*, *Tabāhā Patan*, *Covār Karuṇāmaya*, *Nālā Karuṇāmaya*, *Namo Buddha* and other places are the very basis of *Newār Buddhist* practice dedicated to *Lokeśwara* cult.

## 6.2 Monks

Monks in Kathmandu valley in *Newār Buddhist* tradition are not overtly seen as they do not always wear distinctly distinguishable robes nor they always keep shaved heads. Their signs of monk are symbolic exhibited at times. In occasions only they wear robes, keep patched heads and other paraphernalia of religious monkish identity. One needs to peep and peer into their society and culture to find their *Buddhist* monkish outlook/characters. Their custom made them unique and outsiders misunderstood and made assertion that *Newār Buddhism* is without monks.<sup>170</sup> For simple question, such assumption becomes meaningless. How can *Buddhism* survive without a *Saṅgha* and *monks* ?.

Local *Bares*<sup>171</sup>, a special *Buddhist* community- *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* play the role of monks and traditionally Nepalese *Newār* society has accepted them as monks. Several reasons for this can be forwarded and these will be discussed in detail in succeeding chapter. They are the elite group guiding the *Buddhist* people. Robed monks of *Theravāda* made their appearance just about some six decades before in Nepal and they were welcomed and supported by already existent *Buddhist* society of Kathmandu valley as *Theravāda* (*Śrāvakayāna*) teaching is also a part of their tradition according to their scriptures.<sup>172</sup>

<sup>170</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37),

<sup>171</sup> For details, please refer to Chapter XI ‘*Saṅgha*-the functional unit of Monasticism’

<sup>172</sup> *Hevajra*’s quotation:

*Bhagavān āha/*

*poṣadam dīyate prathamam tadanu śikṣāpadam diśet/*

*Bares* are almost always recruited as *Buddhist* monks at very younger stage through the agency of their parents or guardians. It was considered important to make them monks before they had experienced sexual activities, so monks were brought to the monastery as young boys, usually between the ages of 6-12. On the other hand, it was not considered important what these boys themselves felt about a lifetime commitment to monasticism, and they were basically made monks without regard to their personality, temperament or inclination. However, this tradition of *Newār Buddhists* had long lasting psychological impact on the ordained boys that they commit to abide by *Buddhist* code for the whole life. Thus, interestingly, the process of monastic socialization ultimately has worked in Nepal.

### 6.3 *Saṅgha* members

There is tradition of being monk (*bhikkhu*) initially after taking *Pravajyā* (ordination) in a monastery and of getting fully attached to that particular monastery. However, the ordained person needs not remain as monk for rest of the life. He becomes monk for certain period which has been now reduced at least to four days. One has to do so compulsorily to be the member of *Saṅgha* of the monastery. The act of being monk and taking ordination in the monastery is called *Bare chuyegu* in local *Newārī* language or *Cudākarma*. After *Cudākarma* the ordained person is regarded as *Śākyabhikkhu* and given the membership into the *Saṅgha* of the concerned monastery and member of *Śākya* community. If he further undergoes initiation called *Ācāryābhiṣeka* in the esoteric chamber of the monastery, he is promoted to *Vajrācārya* title and becomes the member of *Vajrācārya* community. Thus, the Nepalese *Buddhist Saṅgha* primarily consists of groups of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*. Depending upon slight variation in mode of ordination *Śākyas* are further sub grouped into *Brahmacārya Bhikkhu*, *cailak bhikkhu*, *Buddhācārya* etc. One thing is common among all *Śākyas* and

---

*vaibhāṣyaṃ tatra deśata sūtrāntaṃ vai punas tathā//  
yogācāraṃ tataḥ paścāt tadanu madhyamakaṃ diśet/  
sarvamantranayaṃ jñātvā tadanu hevajraṃ ārabhet/  
grhṇiyāt sādaraṃ śiṣyaḥ sidhyate nātra saṃśayaḥ//*

G.W. Farrow, I. Menon, *The concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, 1992), P. 273



*Vajrācāryas* in that they all undergo *Pravrajyā* (ordination) in a monastery according to the procedures as directed in the old text “*Kriyā Saṃgraha*<sup>173</sup>” which is supposed to have written by Nagarjunapāda and commentated by Ācārya Mahā Paṇḍit Kuladutta of supposedly 12<sup>th</sup> century, that they all are householder monks not celibate monks. A *vajrācārya* remains the member of *Saṅgha* of the monastery where he was given ordination and also the member of greater national *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* called “*De Ācāgu*”. Though past history<sup>174</sup> reveals that any desirous person can become *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* after obtaining ordination and proven high *Buddhist* scholarship, these titles (*Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*) got transformed into castes and the tradition of conferring ordination, initiation is now confined to these castes only. *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* together with other *Buddhist* followers’ group form a vital and energetic community of practitioners who adhere to a set of practices revolving around the narrative of the *Svayambhū purāṇa*.<sup>175</sup>

The monastics or *Saṅgha* members in *Nepal-maṇḍalā* follow *Vajrayānic* ideal aiming at Buddhahood in order to benefit others (*Buddho bhavēyam jagato hitāye*) and at benefitting others by any means (*sarva prakāram jagato hitāye*). Their practice is based on *Svayambhū purāṇa* and they frequently visit *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* as a part of religious practice. They formed a vital and energetic community of practitioners who adhere to a set of practices revolving around the narrative of the *Svayambhū purāṇa*. It is discussed in detail Chapter XI- ‘*Saṅgha*, functional unit of monasticism and clergy’.

#### 6.4 Monastery (*Vihāra*)

Another way to assess at the magnitude of Newār monasticism is by looking at its magnificent Monasteries. It is clear that Nepal is the home to the large number of old monasteries in the world in the modern era. It serves as exemplifying and

<sup>173</sup> Herakaji Bajracharya, *An Edition and Study of Pravrajyā Vidhi on the basis of Kriyāsaṃgraha Panjikā of Mahā Pt. Kuladatta*, a M.A thesis submitted to Central Department of Buddhist Studies, 2062, Pp. 12-14

<sup>174</sup> Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya, “Buddhadharmako Vikāśkramamā Pūrva Madhyakālik Nepalmā Dekhāparekā Kehi Avarodhaharu: Ak Adhyayana”, *Tribodhi*, Vol III, Department of Buddhist Studies, 2003, Pp. 57-60

<sup>175</sup> *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, Classical Buddhist religious text of Kathmandu, highly revered, available in various long and short forms. It highlights the importance of *Svayambhu* which is the most sacred monument in the *Newār Buddhist* community and serves as the ontological source of the religion, as indicated by textual evidence and ritual practices.

providing proof of the greatness of the Nepalese monastic system. It is obvious that there had to be thousands of men willing to pursue the *Buddhist* teachings to create a *Buddhist* society with a large monastic segment or monasticism. It occurred in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, and monastery is the centre of monastic activities.

In *Nepal-maṇḍala*, the monastery is a *Newār Buddhist* religious complex called *Vihāra*, popularly known as *Bāhā* or *Bāhāl*, and/or *Bahi* or *Bahil* where monastic *Saṅgha* members live by performing different type of rites and rituals. It is a place of religious bliss. *Bāhā*, the local derivative word for *vihāra*, and *Bahi* or *bahil*, which is a modification of the *Saṅskrit* term *Bāhiri* meaning ‘outside’ are the places of *Buddhist* activities. Still at present there are more than 400 ancient monasteries- *Mahāvihāras* and *Vihāras* (*Bāhā* and *Bahis*)<sup>176</sup> related to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism*. Since, the present topic has to deal with the monasticism in indigenous Nepalese *Buddhism*<sup>177</sup> which is also known as *Newār Buddhism*, only old monasteries- *Bāhā* and *Bahi* are being focused here and other monasteries related to Tibetan influenced *Buddhism* and *Theravāda* tradition are not counted.

Regarding the origin of the *Vihāra* in Nepal, scholars hold different opinions. *Vihāras* or monasteries must have come into existence in the Kathmandu Valley long time ago.<sup>178</sup> According to chronicles and popular belief, the Kathmandu Valley became fit for human habitation after *Bodhisattva Manjuśrī* drained the water from the Valley which was once a lake. *Manjuśrī* then enthroned King Dharmākara and the large number of the followers of the king began to reside in the valley as celibate monks. *Vihāras* were supposed to have been built for the residence of these celibate monks for their monastic practice. Though origin of *Vihāra* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* is still obscure, the basic plan for the layout of the *Vihāra* is assumed to be more than two thousand years old.<sup>179</sup> As mentioned in *Buddhist* literature, Gautam *Buddha* and his followers stayed at *Nyāgrodhārāma Vihāra* during his visit to Kapilavastu of Nepal. It is said that in the first year of his enlightenment, twenty thousand monks accompanied the *Buddha* and stayed at this *Vihāra*. In case of *Nepal-maṇḍala*, *Gūn Vihāra* is considered to be the oldest *vihāra*

<sup>176</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 531

<sup>177</sup> Today, following three types of *Buddhism* are prevalent in the kingdom of Nepal, 1. *Theravadins*, 2. *Tibetan influenced Himalayan Buddhism* and 3. *Traditional Nepalese Buddhism*

<sup>178</sup> Vaidya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 150), P.1

<sup>179</sup> Korn, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 109), P. 26

where monks under missionary act of Majjima *Therā* sent by Aśoka, the Indian Emperor, stayed.<sup>180</sup>

Monastery is a dwelling place of *Saṅgha* members where they dedicate their life in the practice and propagation of the *Dharma*. The monastery remains inclusive of all requisites needed for *Dharma* practice and its propagation. It generally houses in the ground floor a large *Buddha* image, a rectangular courtyard for assembly of the followers and display of *Buddhist* articles in occasions, long rooms for *Dharma* teaching or preaching and in the first floor rooms for further extensive practice of *Dharma*, storeroom etc. It is also the monastery where the new comer or neophyte takes entrance into the *Saṅgha* as *Saṅgha* member initially being a monk taking *Pravajyā* (ordination). A separate chapter with the title ‘Monastery- Architectural tradition in Monasticism’ has been devoted to elucidate more on monastery in Nepalese context.

## 6.5 Monastic Code

As it is in all *Buddhist* tradition, duties of *Saṅgha* members in Nepalese *Buddhism* had also been specified. As Nepalese Buddhist masters had been teachers to numerous Tibetan Buddhists, it assumed that *Sarvāstivādin* rules were previously followed. Before that *Mahāsāṃghikā* rules can be assumed to have been followed in Nepal on the ground of evident impact of *Mahāsāṃghikā* and presence of *Bhikṣuni* tradition. Antecedents of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* were known to be *Śākyabhikṣus*. It is known that *Śākyabhikṣus* were *Mahāyāni* monks.<sup>181</sup> They began to appear from 5<sup>th</sup> century onward. This indicated to prevalence of *Mahāyānist* monks. *Mahāyānist* monks did not have their own set of *Vinaya*.<sup>182</sup> They gave priority to philosophy and sincere practice than to *Vinaya*. The study of the earliest teachings in the *Vinaya Pitaka*, obviously reveals that the *Buddha* did not explicitly

---

<sup>180</sup> Bhikṣu Sudarśana, *Nepalaya Bouddha Dharma*, Part II, (Kathmandu: Prem Bahadur Shakya, 2040 B.S.), Pp. 30-42

<sup>181</sup> (i) Gregory Scophen, *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), Pp. 37-38

(ii) Richard S. Cohen, “Kinsmen of the Son: *Śākyabhikṣus* and the Institutionalization of the *Bodhisattva* Ideal” P. 4, in *History of Religions*, Vol. 40, No. 1, *Buddhist Art and Narrative* (Aug., 2000), Pp. 1-31, Published by The University of Chicago Press Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3176511>

<sup>182</sup> William, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 112), P. 5

create any rules of *Vinaya* in the beginning. He taught only principles, *dhamma* (good laws) necessary for the attainment of *nirvāṇa*. Sincere and genuine practitioners did not need *Vinaya* for binding them in practice. They practiced the *dhamma* sincerely and achieved attainment concomitant to their practice-levels even without having taught the *vinaya*. *Mahāyānist* works like *Surangāmā sūtra*, *Upāli-pariprcchā*, *Ugra-pariprcchā*, *Vimal-kīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, etc contemplate *Vinaya* as cultivation of certain attitudes of mind and qualities of heart rather than as observance of a set of rules.<sup>183</sup> *Mahāyānists* regarded it more as mental and moral discipline than as a system of rules and regulations, they did not go so far to discard the rules-only they did not recognize them as ‘categorical imperatives’.<sup>184</sup> It is understood that they followed available *Vinaya* from any of other traditions like *Theravāda*, or *Mahāsāṃghikā*, or *Sarvāstivāda* or *Dharmaguptika*. *Vinayas* of these traditions were contemporary in their origination. It is likely that in Nepal, they followed either *Mahāsāṃghikā* or *Sarvāstivādin* *Vinaya*. But, later when the Kathmandu valley came upon the influence of *Vajrayāna* during early medieval period, there had been several changes and monastics were given liberty of following practice on their own, based on skillful means of benefiting others, upon which *Vajrayāna* gives top priority.<sup>185</sup> Criteria of being *Vajrācārya* are mentioned in *Kudristinirdhātansūtra* of *Kriyā Samuccaya*. The daily activities of *Saṅgha* members residing in the monasteries are in concomitant with those mentioned in the Text ‘*Ādikarma Pradeep*’<sup>186</sup>, and other texts like *Manjuśrī parājikā*, *Tārā parājikā* and so forth. Instead of having full set of *Vinaya* rules, selected *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* stories were used to exemplify the rules to be followed. Since *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* are the path of *Bodhisattva*, its ideals were followed under *Bodhisattva caryā*. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣā samuccaya* are works by Śāntideva extant in original *Sanskrit*, describing the compassionate mind which a *Bodhisattva* must cultivate as the attributes of such a mind. These texts stand as ‘*Vinaya* of a *Bodhisattva*’.<sup>187</sup> *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣā samuccaya* are popular *Mahāyāna* text in Nepal and it is often recited and followed by *Newār Buddhists*. Besides, popular ritual texts and story narratives of

<sup>183</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10), Pp. 174-75

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> Santina, *Op.cit.* (*Op.cit.* 131), P. 215

<sup>186</sup> Details are given in Chapter IX ‘Monastic Life style’

<sup>187</sup> Śāntideva in *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Part IV, sec. 4 and 5, P. 86-7

Parmananda Sharma, *Śāntideva’s Bodhicaryāvatāra- Original Sankrit Text with English Translation*, (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reprint 2001), Pp. 86-87

*Jātaka* and *Avadāna* which have been domesticated and converted into local version have not only provided ethical values but have also shaped the religious life and culture of the only surviving South Asian *Mahāyāna Buddhist* society, the *Newārs* of Kathmandu.<sup>188</sup> *Sarvāstivādins* were accredited to have promoted *Buddhism* through maximum use of *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* stories<sup>189</sup> which are still prevalent in Nepal. Their presence in Nepal in the past had been remarkable. In fact, *Vinaya* is embedded in *Avadāna* and *Jātakas*. *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya* is replete with *Avadāna*. It is believed that the *Avadāna*-class of literature originally belonged to the *Vinaya* itself.<sup>190</sup> Lessons of *Vinaya* were given to the practitioners through telling *Avadāna* and *Jātaka* stories which are very popular in Nepal. *Buddhist* stories including *Avadāna* and *Jātakas* about heroic actions of *Bodhisattvas*, *Buddha* or another spiritually advanced beings are the part of skillful means to demonstrate doctrinal points of the *Buddha*, matching teaching to audience. Some of these stories were domesticated and have become part of Nepalese socio-cultural events.<sup>191</sup> Public story telling is a common practice in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, which attract laity to the *Dharma*. In *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, narratives are told and retold in public storytelling fashion giving sense that it is much less individualistic, antiwoman, and antifamily than expected and giving quite homely atmosphere. Familiarity with these narratives and their public recitation eventually became a recognized monastic avocation within a *Saṅgha* that include folklorists. Public story telling is common practice in *Newār Buddhist*, which attracts laity to the *Dharma*. These stories also served themes for creation of early *Buddhist* art. Artistic depiction made preaching to the laity simple and thus literature was directed more toward householders. The popular story texts also gave rise to formation of *Buddhist* rituals stemming from the compassionate occupation, expressing devotion to the *Tri-ratna* and asserting their interrelationship; on the authority of the *Buddha*, the *Saṅgha* acts to utilize the

---

<sup>188</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 2-5

<sup>189</sup> Abadha Kishor Narayan, "Buddha Aur Bodhisattva Ki Prathama Pratimāye (First Images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas)" in *The Indian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, (Varanasi: Tara Book Agency for BJK Institute of Buddhist and Asian Studies, 1989, Year 1, Vol. 1, Issue 1), P. 67

<sup>190</sup> S.C. Sarkar, "Role of The Sarvāstivāda Narrative Literature in Shaping the Vinaya rules" in Prof. Saṅghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition*, (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994), P.120

<sup>191</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (Op.cit. 23). His book *Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal: Narratives and Rituals of Newār Buddhism* is the outcome of his research based on his field visit and stay of 6 years in *Newār* settlements in Kathmandu valley, assisted by many Nepalese (significantly Labh Ratna and Subarna Man Tuladhar) and foreign informers/scholars.

*Dharma* to create mundane and supramundane blessing; it is not only in Nepal that domesticated *Buddhism* across Asia developed many avenues whereby monastic leaders adapted their lineage's resources as a 'Triple Jewels' to remain a compelling refuge.<sup>192</sup>

## 6.6 Regular Councils

It is already mentioned in earlier Chapter IV- '*Buddhist Monasticism*' in the subheading Components of Monasticism that councils are frequently held as the part of monasticism. Such councils express the presence and functioning of monasticism. Some councils are conducted on regular basis while some other are held when necessity is felt. Councils are conducted to settle the disputes that have arisen, to maintain purity of the *dharma*, to discuss on various issues and problems, to formulate strategies for future actions and to promulgate the rules and regulation. Thus councils show the life and continuity of monasticism. During councils all the concerned *Saṅgha* members or monastics gather together at one place, perform some formalities and discuss the issues of problems and come to the conclusion. Conclusions or decision made by the councils are deemed final and all the *Saṅgha* members have to honour the outcomes. This old practice of convention of councils is still followed by the monastics of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Almost every monastery has a *Saṅgha* with a *thāyepā*, the eldest senior. All the community of monastics- *Vajrācārya Bhikṣus*, *Śākyabhikṣus*, *Brahmacārya Bhikṣus* and *cailaka Bhikṣus* have separate *Saṅghas* of their own. In every monastery, under the *sarva Saṅgha*, the members meet like in a general meeting among themselves at least once in a year for mutual discussion and *Saṅghabhōjan*, a community meal. Besides, there also takes place regional and greater councils covering *Saṅgha* members on regional basis and state basis respectively.

The *Saṅgha* members of monasteries of Kathmandu have still continued their practice of holding regular *Buddhist* councils, at least once in a year. There is separate assembly of each monastery. *Vajrācārya Saṅghas* of some monasteries hold joint assembly called '*Pui Ācāgu*' in regional basis once in a year. There takes place annually a great Assembly called '*De Ācāgu*' with the participation of all the major *Vajrācārya Saṅghas* of Kathmandu valley. Similarly, *Śākya* community too holds such councils separately. During the assembly (Council), recitation of

---

<sup>192</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 8-9

*Buddhist* scriptures, display of *Buddhist caryā* dances, recitation of *caryā* songs, *dāna* practice, ritual worship and offering, communal feast (*Saṅgha bhojan*) are some of the major performance carried out. Discussion is also held for the settlement of disputes if any and for future strategy during the assemblies. In this way all the monastic organizations bind their members with certain monastic rules which enhance mutual support in carrying monastic functions and running the monasteries. The system is still working in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Each main *bāhā* has its own *Saṅgha* and is in this sense a closed and self-sufficient unit.

#### 6.6.1 Councils in Kathmandu

Eighteen *Saṅghas* of eighteen principal *bāhās* are more functional and influential as compared to *Saṅghas* of other monasteries. There is provision of *Pañca-sthavirs* (five *sthaviras*) in most of the monasteries. The *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members of these eighteen *Saṅghas* are also the members of *De ācā gu*, their respective regional *Pui ācā gu*, and also their own individual monastery *Saṅgha*. Thus, councils are held in three levels (i) national level e.g. *De ācā gu* (ii) regional level e.g. *Pui ācā gu*, and (iii) local level e.g. gathering at an individual monastery. There are four *Pui* (region) which accommodate eighteen principal *bāhās* and their branches. They are *Thane Pui* (meaning upper region), *Dathu Pui* (meaning middle region), *Lāyaku Pui* (meaning *Durbār* or Palace region), and *Kwane Pui* (meaning lower region). Each region has its own regional *Saṅgha* organization called *Pui Ācā Gu*. It is still a subject of research to find out who established these *Pui Saṅgha* organization. Patrons of the larger *Saṅghas* of *Puis* were believed to be Vakvajra of *Kwā bāhā* for *Thane Pui Ācā Gu*, Surat Vajra of *Takṣe bāhā* for *Dathu Pui Ācā Gu*, Līlavajra of *Sikhomu bāhā* for *Lāyaku Pui*, and Manjuvajra (famous as *Jāmana: Gubhāju* meaning *ācārya* who never took rice meal) of *Musum bāhā* (*Mani Saṅgha Mahāvihāra*) for *Kwane Pui*. All these four great *Vajrācāryas* are highly honoured as they are regarded as accomplished *Buddhist* masters and *siddhā*. Actually, the *cakreśvars* (senior most *Saṅgha* members) of these four *Puis* are still considered as representation of these four great *Vajrācāryas* and are required to be present at *Svayambhū* when new *Saṅgha* members are introduced at the time of *De Ācā Gu*. Therefore, they were regarded as Four Pillars/Patriarchs of Nepalese *Buddhism*.

Regarding *Dathu Pui* gathering, there is a local version. Around 900 N.S, during chariot pulling festival, the chariot of *Karuṇāmaya*, *Śrī Āryavalokiteśwar* suddenly fell in the pond of vegetable garden which was later turned into Ranipokhari. At that time, a *Vajrācārya* named Munindra Sinh performed propitiatory rite (*śānti swasti*) on *Caitra Śukla Pūrṇimā* day (full moon day of the month *Caitra*, i.e April). The day later transformed into the day of “*Dathu Ācā Gu*” celebration.<sup>193</sup>

Annual council or meeting of *Pui Saṅgha* members under their *Pui ācā guṭhīs* is held within their *Pui* territory on stipulated dates, on *Falgun Śukla Dwādaśi* (12<sup>th</sup> day of brighter half of the month *Falgun*) in case of *Thathu Pui* (with five monasteries), on *Caitra Pūrṇimā* (full moon day of the month *Caitra*) in the case of *Dathu Pui* (with seven monasteries), on *Māgh Kriṣṇa Pratipadā* (first day of darker half of the month *Māgh*) in the case of *Lāyeku Pui* (with only one principal monastery) and on *Baiśākha Kriṣṇa Caturdaśi* (14<sup>th</sup> day of darker half of the month *Baiśākha*) in the case of *Kwane Pui* (with six monasteries). The annual gathering of *Lāyeku Pui* is called *Pohelā guṭhī* as the date fall in the month of *Pohelā* (*Newārī* term for the concerned month) on *Māgh Kriṣṇa Pāru* (first day of darker half of the month *Māgh*, January) and members- both *vajrācārya* and *Sākyas* gathered in the meeting are served elegant communal party meal, *bhoye*. *Saṅgha* members of *Lāyeku Pui* (*Sikhomu Bāhā*) have an additional gathering day called *Kayagukālā guṭhī* on *Jesṭha Kriṣṇa aunsi* day (no moon day of the darker half of the month *Jesṭha*, April). The name is derived from steamed small peanuts distributed among the members after the necessary proceedings and *pūjā* in the monastery. *Jana Bāhā* also has annual gathering day of *saṅgha* members at a stipulated day called *Pohelā Bhoye* day drawing the name from the feast that takes place during the month of *Pohelā*. Apart from such regional counseling meeting, all the *Vajrācārya* members also gather on *Falgun Kriṣṇa Aṣṭami* day at Śāntipur, *Svayambhū* for their greater *De Ācā Gu* meeting. *Vajrācāryas* of eighteen principal *bāhā* monasteries have a separate organization ‘*Vajrācārya Samrakṣan Guṭhī*’ which has the objectives of supporting *De Ācā Gu* meeting and helping fellow members, preserving their identity. *De Ācā Gu* is now being supervised by *Vajrācārya Samrakṣan Guṭhī*.

<sup>193</sup> Annual Report (Bārṣik Prativedan) of *Dathu Pui Ācārya Guthi Sanskrīti TathāSanrakṣan Samiti*, dated 2055 B.S. Chaitra 17, Wednesday, Lhuti Punhi, P. 1



#### 6.6.1.1 The *Ācārya Guṭhī*- Council for ecclesiastical affairs

In addition to gathering of members of individual *Saṅgha*, regional *Saṅgha*, all the *Vajrācārya* members of *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* meet once in a year in a council under the name, *Ācārya Guṭhī* which also culminates in a *Saṅgha* meal after following necessary events like ritualistic process, *dāna* offering, discussion/consultation. *Newār Buddhists*, especially elderly men, often discuss their issue, but the discussion, although lively, is carried on in a tolerant spirit; no one would accuse another of heretical opinions. The *Ācārya guṭhī* was also responsible for standardizing ritual and providing ritual texts for its members.<sup>194</sup> At present following four purposes are being fulfilled through celebration of *Ācāryaguṭhī*- (i) providing opportunity for laity and monastics, of offering to the *Ācāryas*, (ii) to make prayers for well beings of all through ritual performance and recitation of texts like *Pañcarakṣā*, *Swastivācan*, *Mangalācaran*, (iii) honouring the elders, *sthaviras*, and spreading *vajrayānic* message- *Buddho vayam Jagato hitāye*, *Sarva prakāram Jagato hitāye*, and (iv) setting standards for rituals to be conducted and attesting candidates initiated (*ācā luyigu*) in the *vajrayānic* priesthood. In the past, at one time the *guthi* was able to punish and even expel its members from practicing priesthood, if they were guilty found of misconduct. The origin of the *Ācārya guṭhī* is explained by a story linked to Śāntikarācārya who originally initiated anyone irrespective of castes, interested in undertaking the study and yogic training necessary to qualify for the initiation.<sup>195</sup> As time went on, and after imposition rigid caste restrictions became more rigid, it became the rule to initiate further only the sons of *Vajrācārya*. Those who were so initiated all became members of the *saṅgha* of the *āgaṃ* of Śāntipur. It is mentioned that in the beginning, all the initiated *Vajrācāryas* of the Kathmandu valley including Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Thimi, Kīrtipur etc. had a practice of conducting rituals at *Svayambhū* and Śāntipur and performing *Gaṇacakra pūjā* at Buikhel. Later, it took the form of joint annual meeting on stipulated day at a place in Śāntipur of *Svayambhū* and *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members take part organizing national level *De ācārya guṭhī* gathering.<sup>196</sup> Later, *Vajrācāryas* of a certain region began organizing such gathering within their territory. But, these-days they are

<sup>194</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 25

<sup>195</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), Pp. 256-257

<sup>196</sup> Madansen Bajracharya, *De Ācārya Guṭhī, Buddhist Council of Bajracharyas, Tradition and Necessity*, (Kathmandu: Rajendra Man Bajracharya, Bajracharya Samarakṣana Guṭhī, Sahityapālā, Śrīkhanda Tarumūl Vihāra, 1999), P. 11

limited to their own monasteries except for the *Vajrācārya* of Kathmandu. In Kathmandu still all the *Vajrācāryas* of all the monasteries jointly participate annually in such assembly at *Svayambhū*.

The only organization even remotely resembling a church is the *Ācārya Guṭhī* (Association of *Vajrācāryas*) in Kathmandu. The *Ācārya Guṭhī*, or *De Ācā Guṭhī*, as it is called in *Newārī*, is an association of the *Vajrācārya* members of the eighteen main *bāhās* of Kathmandu whose *Saṅghas* have *Vajrācārya* members. The *Ācārya Guṭhī* is the umbrella organization of all the *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* of principal *bāhās*. Of the eighteen principal monasteries of Kathmandu, the twelve have entirely *Vajrācārya Saṅghas* and six have mixed *Saṅghas* of *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākya*s. In a mixed *Saṅgha* the *Śākya* members, though they are full fledged members of the *bāhā Saṅgha* are not members of the *Ācārya Guṭhī*. Only the *Vajrācārya* members of *Saṅghas* of eighteen principal monasteries (*Mū bāhās*) are associated with this national level *Buddhist Ācārya Organization*, ‘*De Ācā Gu*’. ‘*De*’ stands for country or national level, ‘*Ācā*’ is the shortened local version of *Saṅskrit* ‘*Ācārya*’ and ‘*Gu*’ is the shortened form of the term *Guṭhī*. Therefore, the *De Ācā Guthi* is the mother organization of the eighteen principal *bāhās* of the *Vajrācāryas* that were connected with the former state (*De*). This is a grand meeting taking place every year on *Falgun Kṛṣṇa Aṣṭami* day (the eighth day of darker half of the month *Falgun*, around February) at Śāntipur of *Samhegu Mahāvihāra*, *Svayambhū*. Importance of *Svayambhū* and Śāntipur is great in Nepalese *Buddhism*. So, ‘*De Ācārya guṭhī*’ gathering must have been taking place at this venue. Several renowned ancestral *Buddhist* masters had used the place for their meditation retreat, yogic practice at Śāntipur of *Svayambhū*. The ‘*De Ācā Gu*’ is mainly two day religious affair. The number of turn holders is fixed at four, one from each *Pui*. On the first day, the two *pālās*, the turn holders of the upper two *Pui* sections (*Thathu* and *Dathu*) sponsor the activities at *Svayambhū*, while on the next day (*Navami*) sponsorship is made by the two *pālās* of the lower *Pui* sections (*Lāyaku* and *Kvane*). The assembly time is the occasion for *pūjā* seeking the welfare of all and wishing *Nirvāṇa* for the sentient beings, followed by practice of *dāna* and *caryā* song singing by the representatives of eighteen principal *Bāhās* at Buikhel (the base ground at *Svayambhū*). There is still the tradition of ritualistic consecration of *kalaśa* followed by recitation of *Pañcarakṣā* scripture rewritten in N.S. 693 after being original one old, worn and torn, by a *Śākyabhikṣu* of *Dharmacākra Vihāra*, along the *pūjā* in front of *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* at

*Amitabha Buddha* image site, in presence of *De Thāyepā* (*Mūl Cakreśvar*), the seniormost elder, four *Thakālis* (*Cakreśvars*) from four *Puis* and *Pachihā*, the turn holder.<sup>197</sup> The performance is carried out of by turn holder of *Thathu Pui*. After this the newly *pravrajita* (ordained) ones who had just received *Ācāryābhiṣeka* in the same year are introduced to the great *Saṅgha* with offering by them betel nuts (*Goye dān*). The turn holders from *Dathu Pui* perform peace seeking worship of *Māmakī* along with *cacā* chantation (religious songs) at the authorship (*Mūlācārya*) of eldermost senior *sthavir* (*De thāyepā*). After this, the turn holders, his family members and relatives humbly offer *dāna* and eatables to all the *Saṅgha* members gathered at Śāntipur. In the evening turn holders and *sthavirs* gather at Bhuikhel (foot hill of *Svayambhū*), sing their monastic religious songs (*cacā*) according to their monasteries, have their ceremonial (*gaṇa-cakra*) feast and fix next turn holders according to seniority.

Every *Vajrācārya saṅgha* from 18 principal monasteries of Kāntipur has a particular *cacā* song to sing during *De Ācā Gu* time. Events of second day takes place at any of the monastery of *Lāyeku Pui* or *Kwane Pui*. On this day *Kalaśārcan pūjā* is conducted in the morning by the elders from *Lāyaku Pui*. The main *Vajrācārya* priest is visualized as *Vajrasattva* who is offered elaborate *pūjā* along with *Guru-maṇḍalā pūjā*. Several *caryā* songs are also sung. After this *Vajrasattva pūjā*, *caryā* song and *caryā* dance are performed along with other *pūjā*.<sup>198</sup> After *pūjā*, *vajrasattva caryā nritya* is performed along with *dāna* practice wishing salvation of all sentient beings.<sup>199</sup> Second day of *De Ācā Gu* concludes with completion of observance of *Lokottara pūjā* performed in the evening by elders of *Kvane Pui*. One remarkable thing of this day is that the invitees/attendants are served with salted butter *bhote* (*Tibetan*) tea in big earthen pot (*sali*). Therefore, the day is famous as *Cyā Gu*, meaning Tea Assembly. Serving of *Bhote Cyā* made with *Tibetan* salt can be corroborated to the saying that the gathering was established by *Lhāsā* traders (merchants engaged in trade with Tibet). So, *Ācārya Guṭhī* is also known as *Lhāsā Guṭhī*. For the smooth conduction of the great council gathering of *De Ācā Gu*, there are several assisting *guthis* (association) to take the responsibility. They are *Ārhi guṭhi*, *Hinlā-panlā guṭhi*, *Sali guṭhi*, *Cyā guṭhi* etc.

---

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid*, P. 12

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 28-29

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid*, P. 27

Functioning of *Ācārya Guṭhī* gathering exhibits highest cultural, emotional and religious knot among the Nepalese *Buddhists*.

#### 6.6.1.2 Councils of *Śākyas*

There are sixteen prominent *bahis* in Kathmandu, where inhabitants are mainly *Śākyas*. All the *bahis* belong to one over-all organization (*sarva Saṅgha*) known locally as *Śākyabhikṣu Saṅgha* or *bhikṣu bare Saṅgha*. Each *bahi* generally has a single elder; and the elders of the *bahis* belong to an overall-board of elders which must be present at all *bahi* initiation program and which generally rules the life of the *sarva-Saṅgha* in the way the elders of each individual *bāhā* do. There hold dual annual meetings of twenty one elders including five authorized elders from sixteen *bahis* plus sixteen representative elders, one from each of sixteen *bahis*. This gathering is popular by the name *Camelā Guṭhī* which hold meeting once on *Māghe sankrānti* day (first of *Māgh* month) and another on *Baiṣākh Pūrṇimā* day (Full moon day of *Baiṣākh*) of the year. The first meeting takes place in any one of the sixteen monasteries on rotational basis while *Than bahi* is the venue for later meeting. *Than bahi* is unique in having *Pradhān*<sup>200</sup> (non *bare*) *Saṅgha* members. *Than bahi Saṅgha* operates according to *bahi Saṅgha* regulation. Besides, *Śākyas* community at a region hold such meeting annually. Some of the regions where it is held are *Punchhe, Na: bahi* region, *Vikhamā bāhā* (around *Jhochhen* area), *Nagal, Itum Bāhāl, Jyā bāhā, Thānā Bāhā* etc. Even *Vajrācāryas* are invited to offer *Dāna* and *Saṅghabhōjan* community meal at such gatherings. Likewise, *Śākyas* community of other *Bāhā* and *Bahi* also hold annual council which is locally known as *baregu*.

#### 6.6.2 Council in Lalitpur

In Lalitpur there is no great association like '*De Ācā Gu*' of all the *Vajrācāryas* of the city, but in *Kwā bāhā* and other large monasteries like *Bu Bāhā, Bhinche Bāhā* all the *Vajrācāryas* of the monastery have their association. *Vajrācāryas* meet annually in a gathering '*Ācā Gu*'. Gathering of *Vajrācāryas* '*Ācā Gu*' of *Bu Bāhā*

---

<sup>200</sup> *Pradhān* is a type of high class *Shresthacaste*, almost all of its fellow castes and sub caste are *Hindu*. Only those residing at *Than bahi* area are the *Buddhist*.

takes place on *Caitra Kriṣṇa Aṣṭami-Akādaśi*.<sup>201</sup> Similar *Ācā Gu* gathering falls on *Chaitra Kriṣṇa Pratipadā* at *Bhinche Bāhā*, on *Kārtik Punhi* at *Dau Bāhā* (*Duttanāma Mahāvihāra*).<sup>202</sup>

Like in Kathmandu almost all monasteries has its own *Saṅgha*. There is *sarva Saṅgha de guṭhī*, the umbrella organization of *Saṅghas* of all the major monasteries of Lalitpur. Most of the *vihār Saṅgha* has composite members of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* as in *Bu bāhā*, *Vam bāhā*, *Bhinche bāhā*, *Kwā bāhā* of Lalitpur. In some monasteries there are only *Vajrācāryas* as in monasteries like *Dhum bāhā*, *Cuka bāhā*, *Ta: bāhā*, *Dau bāhā*, *Hakhā bāhā*, in others there are *Śākyas* only. The elders are called *daśapāramitā Āju*, representation of ten stages (*daśabhūmi*) to reach Buddhahood. The members of *Saṅgha* are assigned various roles at different stages of the organization. To be the senior members of the *Saṅgha*, one has to be qualified as required by the monastic rules. Once one is initiated he steps up the organizational ladder taking up responsibilities according to the roles and status ascribed to him. *Saṅgha* members undertake the jobs of *bare chuyegu*, *ācā luyegu* for the sons of *Vajrācārya* after *bare chuyegu*, *Bisa: luyegu*, *nāye luyegu*, *cakra kāyegu*, *nyāmha Thakāli luyegu*, *cakreśvar/Thāpāju twayegu* etc.<sup>203</sup> And such monastic functions are discussed and fixed during the council gathering. In *Kwā Bāhā* gathering of all *Saṅgha* members takes place on *Kārtik Śukla Daśami* day, in *Dhum Bāhā* on *Jesṭha Śukla Ṣaṣṭhi*, in *Vam Bāhā* (*Vajrakīrti Mahāvihār*) during *Maṅsir*, in *Yachu bāhā* (*Bālādhargupta Mahāvihāra*) on *Falgun Śukla Tritiyā*, in *Sau Bāhā* (*Jayamanaharvarṇa Mahāvihār*) on *Magha Śukla Dwādaśi*, in *Bhinche Bāhā* on *Baiṣāk Pūrṇimā* and *Māgh Śukla Dwādaśi*, in *Uku Bāhā* (*Rudravarṇa Mahāvihār*) on *Caitra Śukla Trayodaśi*, in *Hakhā Bāhā* on *Mārga Śukla Pratipadā*, in *Si Bāhā* on *Mārga Śukla Akādaśi* and so forth in other monasteries.<sup>204</sup> As there is no umbrella association of *Vajrācāryas* like ‘*De Ācārya guṭhī*’ of Kathmandu to keep the uniformity of the ritual performance, the priestly activity of the Patan *Vajrācārya* is somehow regulated by a set of rules of conduct supposed to have been drawn up by one Tathāgata Vajra of *Kwā Bāhā* who made arrangements for

<sup>201</sup> Herakaji Bajracharya, *Lalitpur Baudha Vihāra -Yalayā Boudha Vihāra, Samkṣipta Parichaya* (*Short Introduction to Buddhist Monasteries of Lalitpur*), (Lalitpur: Baudha VihāraSaṅgha, 2000 AD), P. 18

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 52, 84

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid*, P. 17

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid*, Pp 14-154

ritual texts and the teaching of ritual to *Vajrācārya* in Patan.<sup>205</sup> There is saying that *Vajrācāryas* of Patan and Bhaktapur were once connected to the *āgaṃ* of Śāntipur and they used to observe common *Ācāgu* but broke away when the three cities became separate kingdoms. It is also mentioned that however, some people of Patan ascribed the present arrangement in Patan to the king Siddhinarasinhmalla (1619-1661AD) who called together the leaders of fifteen major *Bāhās* of Patan and made rules for their guidance to organize the religious life of the *Buddhists*.<sup>206</sup>

#### 6.6.2.1 Gathering of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*

*Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Patan has more elaborate monastic functions, rules and regulations which are carried out sincerely and devotedly by the *Saṅgha* members. It has the largest *Saṅgha* members crossing 5000. There is the provision of extra twenty *sthaviras* in addition to ten regular *sthaviras*. Main *āgaṃ* is served with *pūjā* and *Gaṇa-bhojan* rotationally by the Ten main *sthaviras* on every *Pūrṇimā* (full moon day) while such tasks are performed by twenty *sthaviras* on every *aunsi* (no moon day). There is the tradition of celebrating *Ilhane Samyak*<sup>207</sup> in the interval of every five years under the aegis of this monastery. On this occasion, eighteen principal *Bāhā* monasteries, eighteen *Bahi* monasteries and the past organizers of *samyak* actively participate by displaying their *kwāpā-dyo*, *samyak-Dīpaṅkar* images, other images of *Tārā*, *Buddha*, *Bodhisattva*, *caityas* upon invitation from *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Besides, *dāna* is offered to all the *Vajrācārya*, *Śākyabhikṣus*, *Brahmacārya Bhikṣus*, *Cailaka Bhikṣus* who gather at the *samyak* venue. Such *Samyak* is another regular *Buddhist* gathering in Lalitpur.

*Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihār*, locally known as *Kwā Bāhāl*, is the monastery in which monasticism is most continuously and visibly kept up in the shrine of the principal deity. Here the ancient rules are most clearly preserved even today. Dwellers claimed descent from the last laicized monks and supported this claim by the title they traditionally used in Lalitpur, *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* or celibate monk. *Śrāvakayānist* daily rituals are done to the main shrine in *Kwā Bāhāl*, and its *Amoghpaśa Lokeśwara* shrine is nowadays tended by *Newār* monks in the *Tibetan* tradition. As revealed from the note of Evers, ritual system along with ritual acts

<sup>205</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P.30

<sup>206</sup> Locke, *Ibid*, Pp. 30-31

<sup>207</sup> *Samyak* is a kind of grand *Pañcadān* ceremony

and offerings in *Kwā bāhāh* of Nepal are similar to those found in Sri Lanka performed to *Buddha* image in monasteries with royal associations.<sup>208</sup> The daily monastic liturgy seems to have escaped priestly codification.

It is known that in ancient times all the *bahis* of the valley belonged to one *sarva-Saṅgha* under which annual gathering takes place. At present *bahis* are having separate gathering with *Saṅgha bhojan*. Such gathering occurs on *Phalgun Punhi* in *Kwathu bahi* (*Rakṣeśvar Mahāvihār*), and *I-bahi* (*Yampi Mahāvihāra*), on *Māgh Punhi* in *Cikanbahi* (*Saptapur Mahāvihār*), and other *bahis*.

### 6.6.3 Councils in Bhaktapur

Among the 25 monasteries of Bhaktapur, only eleven *Mahāvihāras* and five *Bahis* can be identified existent. Four *Mahāvihāras* have exclusively *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members. They are *Catubrahma Mahāvihāra*, *Akhandaśīla Mahāvihāra*, *Lokeśwara Mahāvihāra* and *Manjuvarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Similarly, seven *vihārs* have only *Śākyas*. They are *Indravarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Kulratna Mahāvihāra*, *Ādipadma Mahāvihāra*, *Jetvarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Jesṭhavarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Dharmauttra Mahāvihār* and *Dharmadhātu Mahāvihār*. The last two monasteries are associated with *Indravarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Nowadays, *Vajrācāryas* of two influential monasteries like *Catubrahmavihāra* and *Puśupati Mahāvihāra* are organizing annual *ācārya guṭhī*. There are arrangement of ten main elders ‘*Daśanāyak*’ who take care of *Saṅgha* tradition in Bhaktapur.

*Vajrācāryas* of Thimi still have their *Ācāryaguṭhī*. *Vajrācāryas* of the monasteries of Thimi except those of *Jiswān bāhā* are the members of the *Saṅgha* of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Non membership of *Vajrācāryas* of *Jiswān bāhā* with the *sarva Saṅgha* of Thimi is understandable from the local saying that they were actually the migrants belonging to *Cuka bāhā* of Patan. It is known that they being the *vaidyas*, were given the task of healing in Thimi but could not return to their original place *cuka bāhā* in Patan due to some political reasons. However, they were given special privilege of acting as *upādhyāya* in major monastic functions like *Saṅgha gathering*, *Pravajyā-samvar*, *Lokeśwara pūjā* etc. Though there are eight existing *vihāras*, this function is being carried out currently only in three *vihāras*. In Thimi, all the *Saṅgha* members are *Vajrācāryas* only. Few *Śākyas* of

<sup>208</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 179-180

present time are the recent migrants who settled there. Their descendants are being ordained at *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Thimi. As there is no *Śākya Saṅgha* in Thimi, there is no council of *Śākyas*.

There are several other occasions when gathering or councils are held in other names like *Busādan*, *Dau pūjā*, *Degu pūjā*, *Mahānkāl pūjā*, *Samyak* etc. by the *Buddhist Saṅghas* of monasteries. But it is ironical to note that such occasions of gathering or councils are being limited to conduction of rituals and communal feast, *Saṅgha bhojan*. These associations are less important nowadays, but in the past they were supposed to ensure uniformity of rituals among their members and smooth running of monasticism.



## CHAPTER VII

### History of *Buddhist* Monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*

*Buddhist* monasticism has so far persisted for more than two and half millennia and during that period it has undergone profound and radical changes. An effort is made in this chapter to trace the history of monasticism in Nepal proper<sup>209</sup> or *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Its history can conveniently be divided into four divisions. The first division deals with popular local beliefs which find way throughout the history. Although legendary or mythological accounts are not considered scientific evidence and are deemed less important, they are, however, helpful to make an ideal elucidation of historical contexts. These accounts are deep rooted in the beliefs of the followers. Therefore, some of such accounts are given space in the beginning along with the history so that they are conducive in tracing the continuity of *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepalese society. Second is the ancient period which can be regarded as formative period when monasticism developed as formal *Buddhist* practices along the development of various sects. Third is medieval period which can be described as assimilation and classical period. In this period *Buddhist* monasticism took a turn and evolved as separate tradition now known as *Newār Buddhism*. The fourth or last period is the modern period which can also be called continuation period.

#### 7.1 Mythological account

*Śākyamuni Buddha* is known as the exponent of *Buddhism* which started after he got enlightenment some 2600 years ago. But local people in Nepal are not ready to hold this view only, rather they believe that *Buddhist* monasticism started much before the birth of Gautam *Buddha*.<sup>210</sup> The mythological narration holding such view is also regarded as very important supportive evidence for the study of

---

<sup>209</sup> Brian H. Hodgson in his book mentioned Nepal proper (Nepaul proper) for *Nepal-maṇḍala*. See Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7)

<sup>210</sup> Shakya & Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 169), P. 28

Nepalese *Buddhism*. Although such commentary deals with mythology as well as stories of the deeds and astounding powers of *Buddhist* deities and the masters, it is deeply entrenched in the practical aspect of Nepalese *Buddhist* culture. It is obvious that the former narratives have no scientific evidence to support their descriptions and do not withstand the challenge of scientific analysis. However, it is always helpful to make an idyllic interpretation of historical contexts and the stability of *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal through the belief of its followers. The continuity of *Buddhist* monasticism has remained unbroken since ancient times. The mythical sources of *Buddhism* in Nepal include narratives such as *Svayambhū purāṇa*<sup>211</sup>, chronicles such as *Bhasā Vamśāvali*, *Gopālrāj Vamśāvali* and other *Vamśāvalis*, local tales and accounts of the incredible activities of the *Buddhist* deities, the followers and so forth.

The local people held certain views on the ground of such mythological accounts which also include visit of *Sapta Tathāgata* (seven human *Buddhas* including *Śākyamuni Buddha*) to *Svayambhū*. The *Sapta Tathāgata Buddhas* who paid visit to *Svayambhū*, as mentioned in *Svayambhū purāṇa* were *Vipaśwī*, *Śikhi*, *Viśwabhu*, *Krakucchanda*, *Kanakmuni*, *Kāśyapa* and *Śākyamuni*.<sup>212</sup> Thus, they believe that *Buddhist Saṅgha* and monasticism existed much before the time of *Śākyamuni Buddha*. But we do not have concrete historical evidences in support of such view.

Monasticism in Nepal as mentioned in *Svayambhū purāṇa*<sup>213</sup>, originated at the time of *Krakucchanda Buddha*<sup>214</sup> though several past *Buddhas* like *Dīpaṅkara*, and *Vipaśwī*, *Viśwobhu*, *Śikhi*, *Kanakmuni* (the four among *Sapta Tathāgatas*<sup>215</sup>) had already visited and trodden the land of Nepal. *Krakucchanda Buddha*, the 24<sup>th</sup> mortal *Buddha* as mentioned in *Buddhavaṃsa*<sup>216</sup>, *Khuddaka Nikāya*, came to Nepal in *Tretāyuga* much before the advent of *Śākyamuni Buddha*, stayed at Bāghdvāra of Śivapuri Hill (Siphucho Hill in *Newārī*) in the north of Nepal and ordained some

<sup>211</sup> Different recensions of *Svayambhūpurāṇa* of various length are available. But all have more or less same contents.

<sup>212</sup> Shakyā & Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 169), Pp. 35 - 47

<sup>213</sup> The *Svayambhūpurāṇa* is the oldest Nepalese Buddhist text purported to glorify the sacred Buddhist shrines of Kathmandu Valley and to highlight the shrine of *Svayambhū Mahācaitya*.

<sup>214</sup> *Svayambhūpurāṇa* is believed to be indigenous text of Nepalese *Buddhism*.

<sup>215</sup> *Sapta Tathāgatas* means seven *Buddhas* namely *Bipasvi*, *Sikhi*, *Biswobhu*, *Kanakmuni*, *Krakucchanda*, *Kāśyapa* and *Śākyamuni*

<sup>216</sup> *Buddhavaṃsa*, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 152)

700 disciples including Gunadhoj *Brāhman* and Avayananda Kśetri.<sup>217</sup> The *Tathāgata* established a monastery and arranged for the first time a *San̄gha*.<sup>218</sup> Thus, the tradition of ordination i.e. making monks was started. The place still exists as the pilgrimage site in Northern hill of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Nonetheless, there is no historical evidence to prove the fact except the legendary account mentioned in *Svayambhū purāṇa*.<sup>219</sup>

## 7.2 Ancient Period -Formative period

For the convenience in dealing the subject, the term “ancient period” is used herewith for the period from the time of *Śākyamuni Buddha* to beginning of *Nepal Samvat* 879 AD. It covers some period of *Kirānti* time to almost whole period of *Lichchavī* time. The period can be considered as the formative period from the perspective of *Buddhist* monasticism as this period witnessed existence and practice of prominent *Buddhist* sects which had contributed to formation of today’s Nepalese monasticism.

### 7.2.1. *Kirānti* Period

There is sufficient tacit references to hold the view that *Buddhist* monasticism was initiated at the time of *Śākyamuni Buddha* if the legendary account is to be rejected in lack of historical proof. As mentioned in Wright’s genealogy<sup>220</sup>, the *Buddha* visited *Nepal-maṇḍala* (now Kathmandu valley) during the period of 7<sup>th</sup> *Kirānti* king Jitedāsti. Also, the *Svayambhū purāṇa* has the account of the visit of *Śākyamuni Buddha* to the valley.<sup>221</sup> It mentions about visit of *Śākyamuni Buddha* to Nepal *Maṇḍala* from Jetavana *Vihāra* at Śrāvasti to pay homage to the *Svayambhū jyoti* (light) with the assembly of the 500 *Bhikṣus* at *Gosṛinga Parvat*<sup>222</sup> and his *Dharma* preaching at *Puchhagra Caitya* in *Svayambhū*.

<sup>217</sup> (i) Hem Raj Shakya, *Sri Svayambhū Mahacaitya*, translated in English by Min Bahadur Shakya, (Kathmandu: Svayambhū Vikāsh Mandal, 2004), P. 19

(ii) Dhundhiraj Bhandari, *Nepalko Aitihasika Vivechana (Historical Analysis of Nepal)*, (Varanasi: Kṛṣṇakumari, 2025B.S),P. 20

(iii) Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), 193

<sup>218</sup> Hem Raj Shakya, *Samyak Mahādāna Guṭhī*, (Kathmandu: Jagatdhar Tuladhar, B.S. 2036), P. 1

<sup>219</sup> *Svayambhūpurāṇa* anchors monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

<sup>220</sup> Wright, reprint 2000, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 20), P. 109

<sup>221</sup> Min Bahadur Shakya, and Shantaharsha Bajracharya(Tr.), *Svayambhū Purāṇa*, (Lalitpur: Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, 2001 A.D)

<sup>222</sup> Another name of *Svayambhū Hill*.

Remarkably, the *Vaṃśāvali* has additional information that the *Buddha* gave ordination (*Pravajyā Samvar*) and also gave teachings to 1350 people including Chuda at *Svayambhū*.<sup>223</sup> The *Lalitvistara Sūtra*, one of the holy texts among *Navavaipulya sūtras*, the holy *Buddhist* canon of Nepalese *Buddhism* mentions in its chapter “*The Yama Niyama Śuciśanti parivarta*” that the *Buddha* resided at *Gopuchha Parvat* for a certain period of time in order to pay obeisance to *Svayambhū* and preached teachings to his disciples.<sup>224</sup> *Mūla Sarvāstivāda Vinayavastu* reveals implicitly the existence of *Bhikṣus* in the Kathmandu valley.<sup>225</sup> It mentions Ananda’s visit to the valley to meet them. Ananda, the chief attendant of the *Buddha* is cited to have visited the valley to meet his *gyātayas* (the fellow kinfolks).<sup>226</sup> *Buddhist* text like *Suvarṇa pravāsa*<sup>227</sup> also corroborates the visit of the *Buddha* with his retinue to the valley. *Śākyas*, fellow monks and relatives of the *Buddha*, who fled from Kapilvastu after the genocide of Virudhak also must have contributed to the establishment of monasticism in Nepal valley.<sup>228</sup> It is not illogical to hold the view that monasticism had begun at the time of the *Buddha* because the valley is quite near to Kapilvastu and Lumbini which are now within Nepal. *Buddha*’s time was the *Kirānta*’s period in Nepal. This indicates prevalence of monasticism in Nepal in *Kirānti* period.

Aśoka (272-232 BCE), the emperor of Maghad is believed to have visited *Nepal-maṇḍala* during the period of 14<sup>th</sup> *Kirānti* king Sthumko and to have constructed several stupas and a *Vihāra* for his daughter Cārumati.<sup>229</sup> He was accompanied by his daughter, Cārumati who, according to chronicles, had Cārumati *Vihāra* of *Cābahil* constructed<sup>230</sup> supporting the monasticism of the valley. The *Vihāra* still exists today as *Cārumati Vihāra* or Dhandu *caitya* in the eastern side of the valley near Boudha. *Cābahil* had been and is still now an attraction for the Chinese and other *Buddhist* monks for several centuries. As Aśoka was the supporter of

<sup>223</sup> Min Bahadur Shakya, *Princess Bhrikuti Devi- The Life & Contribution of the Nepalese Princess Bhrikuti Devi to Tibetan History*, (Delhi: Book Faith India, 1997), Pp.18-19

<sup>224</sup> Nisthananda Vajracharya (Tr.), *Lalita vistara*, edited by Min Bahadur Shakya, (Lalitpur: Young Men’s Buddhist Association, 1978), P.577

<sup>225</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 155i), P. 1

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid*, (f.n. 155i),

<sup>227</sup> One of the text among nine of *Nava grantha*

<sup>228</sup> Harshamuni Shakya, *Buddhadharmako Vikaśama Shākyaharu ko den (Contribution of Shakyas in the expansion of Buddhism)*, (Kathmandu: The Shakya Foundation, 2063 B.S), Pp. 48-47

<sup>229</sup> Cārumati was the daughter of Aśoka from his second wife Tissarakshita.

<sup>230</sup> Wright, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 20), P. 111

*Vibhajjāvāda*, the monasticism of that time must have been its type as found in Magadha in that period. Erection of four Aśokan stupas<sup>231</sup> in Lalitpur is also assigned to the deeds of Aśoka.

However the visit of Aśoka to Kathmandu valley and the facts connected to it have not been historically proved. But what is established fact is that Aśoka had sent missionaries to nine different territories in and outside the borders of India. And, one of the missionaries was led by Majjhima and his companion Kassapagotha who went to Himalayan territories of *Hemavata* region including Nepal. The fact is revealed by the discovery of their relics in a relic-urn at Sānchi with the inscription of the names on the lid describing ‘*Hemvata cariya*’.<sup>232</sup> In the Nāgarjunakonda inscription, there is reference to the attempt for spreading the religion in *Cina-Cilate*, of which *Cilata* is identified with the *Kirāntas* living in the eastern Himalayan region, that is the frontier of Nepal. In *Milindapanha*<sup>233</sup>, there is mention of *Cina-vilata* of which “*Vilata*” seems to be a misreading for *Cilata*. Sylvian Levi writes that *Cilata* was a part of Mahāchina which included Nepal.<sup>234</sup> Dr. Regmi mentions that they were living in Balkh and Dardistan<sup>235</sup> where *Buddhism* had already spread. So, they must have known of *Buddhism* and carried it into Nepal.<sup>236</sup> Historically the oldest known existing *Vihāra* in Kathmandu valley is Gūn *Vihāra* situated on the hillock in Sānkhū. This *Vihāra* is supposed to have been made to accommodate the members of *Buddhist* missionary sent by Emperor Aśoka to Himvatkhanda under the leadership of Majjimtika *Therā* possibly in 236 BC.<sup>237</sup> The very word ‘*Gūn*’ meaning a hill with forest itself refers to *Kirānti* family.<sup>238</sup> Therefore, the ancient *Kirāntas* were the earliest people of Nepal in the north to receive the teachings of *Buddha*, evidently in its elementary form.<sup>239</sup> It

<sup>231</sup> Bhikṣu Sudarśan, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 180), Pp. 26-29

<sup>232</sup> Nalinaksha Dutta, “*Buddhism in Nepal*” in *Bulletin of Tibetology*, Vol. 3, Number 2, Year 1966, (Gangtok: Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, 1966), Pp. 27-46

<sup>233</sup> Dunda Bahadur Bajracharya (Tr.), *Milindapanha*, (Lalitpur: Pavitra Bahadur Bajracharya, Ashok Ratna Bajracharya, Hera Devi Bajracharya, Bīr Pūrṇa Pustak Saṅgrahālaya, 1999), P. 409

<sup>234</sup> Sylvian Levi, *Le Nepal, I*, (New Delhi: India Asian Educational Services 1990), P. 220

<sup>235</sup> D.R. Regmi, *Ancient Nepal*, (Calcutta: K.L Mukhopadhyaya, 1960), P. 19

<sup>236</sup> Levi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 234), P. 75

<sup>237</sup> Bhikṣu Sudarśan 2040 B.S., *Op.cit.* (f.n. 180), Pp. 30-32

<sup>238</sup> Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya (Ed.), *Dhanavajra Bajracharyako Aitihāsika Lekhasamgraha, Bhāga Ek* (Collection of Historical articles of Dhana Vajra Bajracharya, Part One), (Lalitpur: Lalit Research Centre, 2056 B.S), P. 9

<sup>239</sup> Dutta, *Op. Cit.* (f. n. 232)

shows that *Buddhist* monasticism spread during the times of Aśoka (274-232 AD) and later Kaṇiṣka (78- 101 AD). Finding of *Brāhmi* scripted stones and Kuśāṇa coins from Cārumati monastery during recent renovation also confirm the fact in Nepalese context. Besides *Gūn Vihāra*, other popular *Vihāras* believed to be of *Kirāntī* period is Sinagu *Vihāra* situated at *Svayambhū*. According to Korn, some of the oldest *Vihāras* dating back to the first century A.D. are *Vikramśīla Vihāra* (*Tham-Vihāra* of Thamel), *Viśarukhya Vihāra*, *Cakra Vihāra*, *Hemvarṇa Vihāra* and *Bhyu Bahāl*.<sup>240</sup> Whether these ancient *Vihāra* bear any resemblance to contemporary ancient Indian *Vihāras* is the subject of further research. However, it can be said that *Vihāras* like *Gūn Vihāra* and *Sinagu Vihāra* are still serving as the emblem of monastic activities for a mass of Nepalese *Buddhists*.

During this period, sectarian movement was not noticed though different *Buddhist* sects have already evolved in Indian subcontinent. However, there is a room for speculation that *Mahāsāṃghikā* would have flourished in the areas like Sāṅkhu which was once a town in ancient period. Later finding of *Sāṅkhu* inscription of 7<sup>th</sup> century in the period of Narendradeva mentioning *Mahāsāṃghikā* gives support to such speculation.

### 7.2.2 *Lichchavī* Period

It was the later part of the ancient Nepal that covers the time period from the commencement of Christian era to the beginning of *Nepal Samvat* or 879 A.D.<sup>241</sup> So far as *Buddhist* monasticism is concerned, the *Lichchavī* period is significant in Nepal's history.

History of *Buddhist* monasticism became more clear from *Lichchavī* period as inscriptions which are the important and authentic source of history appear from this period only. About forty *Lichchavī* inscriptions related to *Buddhism* are available so far.<sup>242</sup> They amply shed light on *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal. These *Lichchavī* inscriptions divulge that *Buddhism* was in its full-fledged form during ancient time, and was also favoured by the rulers. *Buddhist* monasticism also

<sup>240</sup> Korn, *Op.cit.* (f.n.109), P. 26

<sup>241</sup> The term "ancient times" generally means the period starting from the time after the downfall of the *Kirānts* to the time of the start of *Nepal Samvat* that began from 879 A.D.

<sup>242</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17),

flourished to its maximum. *Lichchavīs* being the descendants from Vaiśālī, which was a *Buddhist* city from *Buddha's* time, had known about *Buddhism* and had supported it from the beginning.

Nepalese sources are almost silent about the visits of the Indian scholars. Similarly, they throw no light on the activities of Nepalese scholars. Tibetan sources talk of the visits of Indian scholars in *Lichchavī* Nepal and activities of Nepalese *Buddhist* masters. Nāgarjuna, Vasubandhu, Śāntarakṣita, Padmasambhava and Kamalaśīla were some of Indian *Buddhist* scholars who worked in Nepal during *Lichchavī* time. Among them Nāgarjuna and Vasubandhu are described to have visited at the initial phase of the *Lichchavī* rule in Nepal. Nāgarjuna (166-196) propagated *Madhyāmika* doctrine based on *Prajñāpārāmītā sūtra*. His activity centralized at Dhanyakataka of Guntur and Sriparvat (mountain), Andhrapradesh. But his activities were also well noticed in Kathmandu which is proved by several references, even by the existence of Nāgarjuna mountain in Kathmandu. The hill where Nāgarjuna had realizations in ultimate truths was named after him. It is believed that Nāgarjuna visited *Svayambhū Caitya* and acted for some time as a priest of the *caitya*. It is also described that he spent long time into the Śāntipur cave in *Nāg-Sādhanā* and other prayers. He was trained in famous Nālandā University. *Prajñāpārāmītā* is still held with high esteem by the *Buddhists* of Nepal. After third century several eminent *Buddhist* master evolved like Asanga, Vasubandhu etc. who disseminated mind only doctrine. Those masters and their disciples and several others educated at the renowned Universities like Nālandā and Vikramśīla produced a galaxy of *Buddhist* masters for Nepal. They were the philosopher monks who gave the impetus to *Buddhism* of Nepal. Ācārya Vasubandhu, a great *Buddhist* philosopher and the author of *Abhidharmakośa*, of 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. is also said to have visited Nepal valley to propagate his doctrine. It is described that 500 followers accompanied him and while in Nepal he propounded his doctrine.<sup>243</sup> Nāgarjuna and Ācārya Vasubandhu also constructed *Vihāras*.<sup>244</sup>

*Vamśāvalis* (genealogies) provide references to the *Vihāras* of *Lichchavī* period. According to the *Gopalrāj Vamśāvali*, King Vrisadeva (of late 4<sup>th</sup> century), the

<sup>243</sup> Cited from Min Bahadur Shakya' *A short history of Buddhism in Nepal*, (Lalitpur; Young Buddhist Publications), Pp.7-8.

<sup>244</sup> Shakya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 218), P. 2

great grandfather of Manadeva I, founded the *Sinagu-Vihāra-Chaitya-Bhattarika*. Further, According to Hemraj Shakya he was a disciple of *Bhikṣu Śāntiśīla* upon whose instruction he made construction at *Svayambhū* and he himself worked as the priest before finding *Śākyabhikṣus* for taking up this responsibility.<sup>245</sup> He was often credited to have established *vihāras* like *Manju Bāhāl* (at *Cabahil*) and *Puṇya Vihāra* lending support to monasticism. *Sri Rāj Vihāra* was constructed by King Dharmadeva, father of Māndeva I.<sup>246</sup> The existence of many *Vihāras* (monasteries) in *Nepal-maṇḍala* indicates that the monasticism was very much developed during the period. However, most of all the existing *Vihāras* of Kathmandu are of *Mahāyāna* origin. This is because during the early *Lichchavī* period, when *Vihāra* architecture developed in Nepal, *Mahāyāna* had become a predominant sect in *Buddhism*.

The inscription of Kings Mānadeva, Śivadeva I (588-605 A.D), Narendradeva (643-679 A.D), Jayadeva II (713-733 A.D) and others are important to know about the Nepalese *Buddhism* of that period. Among them, Mānadeva (464 A.D. to 505 A.D.), from whose period inscriptions begin to appear was the most famous king among the *Lichchavī* rulers. He built many *Vihāras* and stupas in different parts of the country. He renovated the *Cakra Mahāvihār*. Gopalrāj *Vaṃśāvali*, therefore, talks of Mānadeva taking refuge in *Gūn Vihāra* after the retirement.<sup>247</sup> According to the inscription of Jayadeva II, after Mānadeva, Mahideva and Basantadeva successively became the king of Nepal. A few generations after Basantadeva, Śivadeva I, ascended the throne of Nepal.<sup>248</sup>

Śivadeva I was another distinguished ruler of the *Lichchavī* dynasty. He was enthroned in about 588 A.D. From the very beginning of his rule, he placed Amśuermā in charge of the entire administration of the country. Śivadeva I was impressed by Amśuermā's heroism and administrative ability that made him 'Mahāsāmanta'. Then the dual administration was held for some time. Later, he relinquished the throne handing over authority to Amśuermā and retired into a monastery being a *Buddhist* monk for some time. Śivadeva *Vihāra* was mentioned

<sup>245</sup> Shakya, *Op. cit.* (217i), P. 87

<sup>246</sup> Bajracharya *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 173

<sup>247</sup> Kamal Prakasha Malla and Dhanavajra Vajracharya (ed), *The Gopalrāj Vamsāvali*, (Kathmandu; Nepal Research Centre, 1985), Pp. 76, &123

<sup>248</sup> (According to Jagadish Chandra Regmi, Śivadeva was the son of Mānadeva II.)



as constructed by Śivadeva for this purpose. Having found monk's life too difficult and uneasy, he later abandoned monkish robe and remained as devoted supporter of *Buddhism*. It is mentioned that only four days after the king turned monk, he approached his teacher to express his wish to be householder.<sup>249</sup> The teacher presented evidences from scriptures to state that a *Bhikṣu* can return to a married life and become *Vajrācārya*. Considering this incidence important, some historians believe that the custom of being monk for some time and taking the garb of householder monk by the leading *Buddhists* had its root here, following the pattern pursued by their king Śivadeva-I. The king was also known to have built a monastery for his teacher *Bhikṣu*.

Influence of Śāntideva on *Newār Buddhist* culture and monasticism seem tremendous and significant. His most acclaimed texts like *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śikṣā samuccaya* provided a long lasting motivation for the strengthening of *Bodhisattva*-way of life according to *Mahāyānic* ideals paving a path to development of *Vajrayāna* pantheon. It is quite interesting to note the similarities in short biographies available of Śāntideva and Śāntikarācārya- the alleged progenitor of *Vajrācāryas* and founder of structure of *Svayambhū* in Nepal. They provide ample ground for speculation that these two personalities could have been the same. Similarities are as follows. Both were *Buddhist ācārya* with the first name Śānti, the former Śāntideva and the later ŚāntiŚrī. Both are the best known for their miraculous potentiality and were staunch followers of *Manjuśrī* tradition. Both were from royal families of India. Śāntideva is credited to have begun *Avaivartika* (non-retrogressing) *Saṅgha* which is known to be a type of *Vajrayānic Saṅgha*. It is quite probable that such a *Saṅgha* could be *Vajrācārya Saṅgha*. It is mentioned that Śāntideva went to a forest, south of North India and vanished. It could be the period that he landed in *Nepal-maṇḍala* and became famous as *Ācārya Śāntikara* through his erudite knowledge on *Buddhism*. It can be assumed that only a person with profound faith and knowledge on *Buddhism* can feel and identify the importance of *Svayambhū* and Śāntideva was one such man. It is also mentioned in his biography that he worked as a body guard of a feudal king. At that time political instability prevailed in Nepal. There was rivalry between 'deva' and 'gupta' rulers and throne holders had remained inconspicuous due to their scuffle for power. Śāntideva could have served one of them. The period should be

---

<sup>249</sup> Wright, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 20), Pp. 86-87

somewhere after Basantadeva and Narendradeva. Depending merely upon one base that Śāntirakṣita had spent 5 years in Nepal, Rajendra Ram made assumption that he should have been Śāntikarācārya (for details please see his text- *History of Buddhism in Nepal*).<sup>250</sup> What should we say after having considered those several points bearing similarities of account between Śāntikarācārya and Śāntideva. This needs further research to confirm the fact.

Several *Vihāras* were mentioned in various *Lichchavī* inscriptions indicating the popularity of practice of Monasticism in Nepal. For example, *Gūn Vihāra*, *Mān Vihāra*, *Śrī Rāj Vihāra*, *Kharjurikā Vihāra*, *Madhyama Vihāra* are mentioned in Handigaon inscription of king Amśuvarma (606-621 AD).<sup>251</sup> The inscription also reveals that some major monasteries like *Gūn Vihāra*, *Śrī Rāj Vihāra*, *Madhyama Vihāra* etc. received regular royal fund.<sup>252</sup> *Lichchavī* rulers favoured *Buddhism* and enthusiastically helped *Buddhist* monasticism to function effectively.

Further, in the inscriptions there are mention of the names of a few other *Vihāras* existing during the *Lichchavī* period. They are *Abhayaruchi Vihāra*, *Vārtakalyān Gupta Vihāra* and *Chaturbhattansan Vihāra*. These *Vihāras* are referred in the *Yāgabāhāl* inscription of *Lichchavī* King Narendradeva.<sup>253</sup> *Śrī Śivadeva Vihāra* is also another important *Vihāra* mentioned in the *Yāg Bāhāl* inscription of Narendradeva time.<sup>254</sup> This inscription and *Vajradhar* inscription<sup>255</sup> of Narendradeva time show how monasticism was supported by then rulers in *Lichchavī* time. The *Saṅgha* was given authority of levying tax from two villages, Gullotaranga and Anchagartagrām and exerting judicial action also regularizing civil laws in the villages.<sup>256</sup> The collected tax was to be used for upkeep of monasticism. Existence of several important *vihāras* like *Gūn Vihāra*, *Sri Māna vihāra*, *Kharjurikā vihāra*, *Yama vihāra*, *Chaturbhalātusāna vihāra*, *Abhayaruchi vihāra*, *Śrī Rāj vihāra*, *Varta Kalyāṅgupta vihāra* etc. reveal that they were active centres of *Buddhism* in Nepal in that period. These *vihāras* of Nepal proved to be

<sup>250</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 36

<sup>251</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 323-4

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, Pp. 496-498

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, Pp. 496-498, 499,

<sup>255</sup> *Ibid.*, Pp. 499-506

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid*

the bulwarks of *Buddhist Saṅgha* and monasticism serving the cult at different levels in Nepalese *Buddhist* society.

During this period, the *Vihāras* were organized under the guidance and management of the *Buddhist Saṅgha*. Regarding *Buddhist Saṅgha*, mention of *Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha* in some inscriptions like those of King Narendradeva<sup>257</sup> is remarkable. Not only *Ārya Saṅgha*, but also *Ārya Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* is mentioned in the inscriptions like those of Anśuvarma<sup>258</sup> and *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* in *Musumbahāl* Inscription<sup>259</sup> of Narendradeva. One of the *Lichchavī* inscriptions mentions about *Caturdiśa Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha* (*Bhikṣu Saṅgha* from the four directions). *Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha* probably belonged to then *Mahāsāṅghikā*.<sup>260</sup> This indicates that the *Saṅghas* had a predominant status in the society and played a significant role in construction work as well as the maintenance of the *Vihāras*. Inscriptions show that grant was availed to *Saṅgha* in state and public level.

The role of Nepalese scholars is also noteworthy as they too have contributed to *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal. *Ācārya Śīlamanju*, *Anangavajra*, *Bandhudatta*, *Thalarinwa* and *Smriti*, and *Buddhakīrti* played great role in propagating *Buddhism* in the valley and abroad. *Śīlamanju* went to Tibet at the invitation of Tibetan king *Sron-bston-sGam-po* and *Bhṛīkūti*. He was well versed in *Mahāyāna* literature. His knowledge must have been expended in the contemporary society. While in Tibet, he translated *Gūṇakāranda Vyūha Sūtra*, *Karmasataka*, *Dharmakośa* and many other *Saṅskṛit* texts into Tibetan language. In the seventh century *Vajrayāna* philosophy became popular following the writing of *Prajñopāya Vinischaya Sidhi* by *Anangavajra*. *Ācārya Bandhudatta*'s contributions has been attributed to *Karuṇāmaya* (*Padmapāni Lokeśwara*) tradition which still attract scores of devotees.<sup>261</sup>

During *Lichchavī* period, reputed *Buddhist ācāryas* or monks had played the role of royal advisor or teacher as evidenced from the famous *Paśupati* inscription of the

---

<sup>257</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 496-503

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 382-383

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid*, P. 507

<sup>260</sup> For details, please see chapter *Sectarian Influences*, Chapter VIII, P. 242

<sup>261</sup> *Ashakaji Bajracharya, Bungadyo Nepāle Bijyākugu Khan (A Story relating to visit of Bungama-Lokeswara to Nepal), (Nepal Bhasāyā Vamśāvali Maniratnamālāyā Chagu Anśa)*, (Lalitpur: Saroj Bajracharya, 5<sup>th</sup> reprint, 2051 B.S)

king Jayadeva II in the middle of 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>262</sup> The inscription not only exhibits erudition of the *Buddhist ācārya*, Buddhakīrti but also shows the position of monks and monasticism in those period. Due to liberal religious policy and sincere devotion of the king Jayadeva II, the time became favourable for Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. That is why a *Buddhist ācārya* was given royal dignity in that period. Some scholars also mentioned about a prince who became *Bhikṣu* and retired to *Chakra vihāra* at that time and one another prince who followed the example of being monk.<sup>263</sup> It can be corroborated with the issue of Baradeva, the alleged son of Jayadeva II, who was known by the name Aramundi after he became *Buddhist* monk. *Bara* deformed to *Ara* and *Mundi* is actually *Mundit* meaning a *Bhikṣu* with shaved head. There is a description in *Rājatarangini* of Kalhāna which mentions about a king of Nepal, Aramundi who defended and defeated successfully the attack of ambitious Kaśmiri king Jayapīḍa Vinayaditya.<sup>264</sup> Other sources mention Vijayadeva as the son of Jayadeva II.

It is said that the arrival as well as sojourn in Nepal of three *Vajrayāna* philosophers of the Nālandā University Śāntarakṣita (705-762), Padmasambhava (717-762) and Kamalaśīla at the end of the *Lichchavī* period laid a strong foundation of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* in Nepal. Śāntarakṣita, a famous Indian logician, came to Nepal in 743 A.D and stayed for five years. His *Yogācāra-Svatantric -Mādhyāmika*<sup>265</sup> theory might have become popular among the Nepalese *Buddhist* scholars of this time. Padmasambhava, a professor of *Yogāchāra* school of *Tāntric Buddhism* stayed in Nepal practicing *Tāntric Sāadhanās* for four years, and in A.D. 747 he left for Tibet. Kamalāśīla, the disciple of Śāntarakṣita and a great *Buddhist* philosopher visited Nepal and spent some years in the valley on his way to Tibet. During his visit in Nepal in 762 A.D. he was warmly received by the Nepalese *Buddhists*. He visited all the famous *Buddhist* centres of the Valley, especially the *Svayambhū Caitya* and Bouddhanāth. While in the valley the trio worked for the propagation of Nepalese *Buddhism*. The *Yogic sādhanās* of Padmasambhava and the logistic approach of Kamalāśīla influenced both the rulers and the people towards *Mahāyāna Buddhism* and inspired them towards *Mahāyāna* activities. In this way they all visited Nepal where they preached and worked for

<sup>262</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 548-562

<sup>263</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 31

<sup>264</sup> Bhandari 2025 B.S, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 217ii), P. 62

<sup>265</sup> William , *Op.cit.* (f.n. 112), Pp. 58-59

the expansion of Nepalese *Buddhism*. The three (trio) eminent *Buddhist* scholars (Śāntarakṣita, Padmasambhava, and Kamalaśīla of eighth century) who were responsible for the establishment of *Buddhism* in Tibet, also might have played significant role in the development of *Buddhism* of Nepal by preparing a sound ground while they had spent sufficient time in Nepal in course of their travel to Tibet. The *Buddhistic* activities of then kings of Nepal might be due to influence of these trio, evaluating which scholars like Rajendra Ram made assumption that Padmasambhava and Śāntarakṣita might be the legendary figures Odinācārya and Śāntikarācārya respectively, mentioned in *Svayambhū purāṇa*. Historically, the period after Jayadeva II to beginning of Nepal era i.e 879 AD remained less known and so it is termed as years of confusion. However, it can be assumed from the growing number of monasteries and *Buddhist* practitioners like *Śākyabhikṣus*, *ācāryas*, and *Siddhās* that *Buddhist* monasticism continued unabatedly and it was less affected.

Influence of the activities of some *Siddhās* like Sarāhapāda, Kānhā, Dombi, Kambalanbara, Kabira, Tulasi etc was also seen on Nepalese *Buddhism*. A *Siddhā* is perfected or accomplished one or the realized one who combines *Bodhisattva* path with *tantric* accomplishments/powers.<sup>266</sup> *Bodhisattva* and *siddhās* are considered equivalent as far as their philanthropic deeds are concerned. They have contributed to development of *Caryā* songs of Nepalese *Buddhists*. Among them the prominent one is renowned *Siddhācārya* Sarāhapāda, a pioneer monk scholar and a near contemporary of Padmasambhava. His impact on *Newār Buddhism* can be felt from some of his poetic creations which are still sung as ‘*Cacā*’ song during the performance of rituals by *Vajrācārya* of Kathmandu valley.<sup>267</sup> Sarāhapāda, as a revolt, was known to have advanced his revolutionary activities by marrying the daughter of a Sarakara (arrow maker) and also learnt the art of arrow making.<sup>268</sup> This version is veritable with the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* who marry and adopt blameless profession for earning their livelihood. Such accounts exhibit that Nepal had served as the early field of the *siddhācārya*.

<sup>266</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 129

<sup>267</sup> (i) Ratnakaji Bajracharya(Ed.), *Pulāngu wa Nhugu Cacā Munā (Collection of Old and New Caryā songs)*, Part I, (Kathmandu: Vridhri Man Shakya and Badri Man Shakya, 1996)

(ii) Ratnakaji Bajracharya(Ed.), *Pulāngu wa Nhugu Cacā Munā (Collection of Old and New Caryā songs)*Part II, (Kathmandu: Vridhri Man Shakya and Badri Man Shakya, 1999)

<sup>268</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 53

With the rise of Neo *Buddhists* in the form of Nāthapanthi for some time in the second half of ninth century, *Nepalese Buddhism* suffered to some extent. Nāthpantha was a separate religious tradition which was intermingled with *Buddhism*.<sup>269</sup> The exponent of this tradition was Gorakhnātha who is supposed to have come to Nepal in 850AD. He was a *Buddhist* monk named Ramanavajra in the beginning. Later, he turned into a suspicious figure of *tantric Nāth yogi* mixing *Hathayoga* and *Buddhist tantricism*.<sup>270</sup> He was associated with propagation of *Matsendranātha* cult in Nepal. *Buddhists* regard the deity as *Avalokiteśvara* (*Lokeśvara*). Gorakhnātha assimilated the rites and tenets from various sources, even from non *Buddhist* ones, and tried to revolutionize thinking and working of religious life in Nepal. His dominion lasted till his stay in Nepal up to the end of 9<sup>th</sup> century.

In summary, regarding the history of *Buddhist* tradition in *Lichchavī* period can be surmised as follows. (1) The *Lichchavī Buddhist* society was united religiously. This was a major contribution in the task of transforming Nepal into a *Buddhist* country. Budhakīrti, a monk served the country as the poet and the royal tutor of Jayadeva II during mid eighth century. From the ancient time, Nepal remained as *Buddhist* country till *Lichchavī* period due to effort of several *Buddhist* scholars as mentioned earlier.<sup>271</sup> (2) This period also saw separate and parallel development of prominent *Buddhist* sects which had contributed significantly to evolution of what is known today as *Newār Buddhism*. Sources reveal that *Theravāda*, *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Sarvāstivāda*, *Mahāyāna*, and *Vajrayāna* existed simultaneously in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Xuan Xāng (Hiuen tsang, 629-645 AD), the great Chinese monk traveller who travelled most of the parts in India and Lumbini of Nepal mentioned that there were some two thousand monks belonging to both *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna*.<sup>272</sup> He further mentioned that the *Buddhist* monasteries and the *Hindu* temples touch one another and then king Amśuvarma had a sincere faith in the *Buddhist* religion”.<sup>273</sup> By *Hinayāna* it may mean either *Theravāda* or *Sarvāstivāda* but here it meant *Sarvāstivāda* as the deprecatory term ‘*Hinayāna*’ was applied

---

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid*, P. 77

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 89-90 ?

<sup>271</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), Pp. 2-3

(ii) Bista, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 6)

<sup>272</sup> Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India AD.629-645*, Vol. I & II in one bound, (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996)

<sup>273</sup> David L. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, (London: Serindia Publications, 1987), P.370

especially to *Sarvāstivāda*.<sup>274</sup> And, by *Mahāyāna*, it may be *Mahāyāna* evinced by *Lokeśwara* cult or the *Vajrayāna*. Evidences including inscriptions mentioning these prominent *Buddhist* sects are remarkably contemporary falling in the period between 600 to 750 A.D. Clear indication of presence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* monasticism is shown by Sāṅkhu inscription of Narendradeva period (after the middle of 7<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>275</sup> This is supported by several other evidences.<sup>276</sup> Similarly, *Gokarṇa* inscription of Amśuvarma time (606-621 AD) mentions *Vajrayāna*.<sup>277</sup> This can be linked with the mention of *Vajrabhairava* in the Gorkha inscription of Śivadeva II' period.<sup>278</sup> Both these inscriptions provide testimony to *Vajrayāna* monasticism in Nepal. (3) Each monastery whether it belonged to *Mahāsāṃghikā* or *Sarvāstivāda* or *Mahāyāna* or *Vajrayāna*, had a *Saṅgha* of monastics. (4) Not only *Bhikṣu saṅgha*, but *Bhikṣuni saṅgha* also prevailed during *Licchavī* period. Besides, *Licchavī* inscriptions relating to *Buddhism* provide important information on the *Buddhist Saṅgha*, donations made to the *Vihāras*, the consecration of deities, the cult of *Avalokiteśvara*, Status of *Bhikṣu Saṅgha* and *Bhikṣunī Saṅgha*, jurisdiction of the *Saṅgha* etc. Besides local support, monasteries and the *Buddhist Saṅgha* were supported by the kings. (5) They were classed into categories to facilitate royal support. As revealed from Amśuvarma's Hadigaon inscription, the monasteries like *Gūn vihāra*, *Śrī Māna vihāra*, *Śrī Rājvihāra*, *Kharjurikā vihāra*, *Madhyama vihāra* were categorized in high class, receiving royal fund equivalent to that given to Paśupati shrine.

### 7.3 Medieval period

This is the period between the time after the beginning of Nepal Era in 879 A.D to conquest of the valley by the king Prithwinarayan Shāh in 1768. Within this period, the time till the rise of Jayasthimalla in 1396 is treated as early Medieval period, and remaining period is considered later Medieval period.

<sup>274</sup> Hirakawa Akira, *A History of Indian Buddhism*, Reprint 2007, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, 1993), P. 2

<sup>275</sup> Bajracarya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 508-9

<sup>276</sup> For details please see "Impact of *Mahāsāṃghikā* in Nepal mandala" in the Chapter VIII 'Sectarian Influence'.

<sup>277</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 370-71

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 523-525

### 7.3.1 Early Medieval Period (879 to 1396 A.D)

No detailed historical account has been constructed so far for the era after the *Lichhavi* period until the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Though this early medieval period lacks inscriptional support, the history of *Buddhist* monasticism is known from foreign accounts mainly *Tibetan* sources and available documentary evidences and colophons preserved in the Manuscripts and *thyāsaphu* (traditional book) form in local *Bāhās* and *Bahis* (Monasteries). Inscriptions dealing with the period are available after the thirteenth century. The earlier phase of the medieval period, also known as the *Thakuri* period and transitional period in the history of Nepal had a remarkable and decisive impact on *Buddhist* monasticism. Monasticism in this period seemed well developed as even foreign scholars were attracted to visit the valley. Not only from India and Tibet, *Buddhist* scholars from other lands kept coming to Nepal indicating that Nepal was a major *Buddhist* destination for *Buddhist* scholarship. The Chinese *Buddhist* priests also like Kiye visited Nepal, with a mission. Work of Srilankan *Buddhist* scholar named *Ācārya* Jayabhadra of ninth century is noticed from the colophon of scripture of *Cakrasaṃvara tantra*.<sup>279</sup>

In the beginning of tenth century, after the disappearance of Gorakhnātha from religious scenes *Buddhist* monasticism regained its previous vigour under patronage of the kings and *Buddhist* monks. *Buddhism* was strengthened under the aegis of the king Gunakāmadeva (986-990 A.D) who is credited to have revived *Matschendranātha Ratha Yātra* (Chariot pulling festival) in buddhisticated way and to have converted the four Nāthapantha centres into *Buddhist* ones (*Ādinātha*, *Matshendranātha*, *Śṛistikāntā Lokeśwara* and *Amoghapāśa Lokeśwara*).<sup>280</sup> Contribution of a *Buddhist ācārya* of this period around 967 AD, Bodhigupta to the monasticism seems laudable as he was mentioned *Paramācārya* meaning highly knowledgeable.<sup>281</sup> Other notable Nepalese *Buddhist* scholars of 11<sup>th</sup> century were Vagisvarakirti<sup>282</sup> of around 1004 AD., Śāntibhadra, Anantaśrī. They were famous even in Tibet. Contribution of *Mahā Paṇḍit Śākyabhikṣu* Gautamśrī of around 1023 who constructed *Saptapur Mahāvihār (Guitabahi)*, and *Śākyabhikṣu* Subhasri to Nepalese monasticism remained significant.<sup>283</sup> *Mahā Paṇḍits* were those who

<sup>279</sup> Hari Ram Joshi, *Mediaeval Colophons, Vol. I*, (Lalitpur: Joshi Research Institute, 1991), Pp. 6-7

<sup>280</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33)

<sup>281</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Pp.16-18

<sup>282</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 155i), Pp. 71 & 87

<sup>283</sup> (i) Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), Pp 37-38,



earned fame also in foreign lands. Another famous *Buddhist ācārya* of that time was Ravindradeva.<sup>284</sup> Most important and vital part was played by Rudradeva, a Nepalese ruler who accepted monkhood in 1028 and is said to have retired to the old monastery of Kathmandu Valley, *Ankulivihāra*, *Rudra Varṇa Mahāvihāra* where he spent rest of his life as a *bandya* (monk).<sup>285</sup> This event also greatly contributed to the further progress of Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. Another king Bhaskardeva (1042-1052 A.D) strengthened monasticism by establishing several monasteries among which *Itum Bāhā* (*Keśacandrapārāvarta Mahāvihāra*) and *Kwā Bāhā* (*Hiraṇyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*) still stood today and significant. He is also believed to have built monasteries like *Naulo Vihāra* and *Hemvarṇa Vihāra*. It was in his period that Atiśā, the eminent *Buddhist* monk/master stayed in Nepal. Among the foreign scholars who visited Nepal in Medieval period, the sojourn of Atiśa became remarkable having long lasting consequence that affected Nepalese monasticism.

#### 7.3.1.1 Atiśā's role

After the emergence of *Vajrayāna* with the introduction of esoteric practice, the distinction between exoteric and esoteric aspects has been a source of tension as well as creativity. By tenth century several *Siddhās* rose and *Vajrayāna* became the tradition of *Siddhās*. 84 *Siddhās* are popularly known as the path-exemplifiers. The views and practices contained in the *sūtras* and in the *tantras* seem to clash in many ways. *Sūtras* were viewed insufficient. The *tāntric* view of fundamental purity appears to be strikingly different, as are *tāntric* practices, which seem to challenge exoteric moral standards. This clash became particularly obvious in the ninth and tenth centuries when political instability and natural calamities, coupled with domestic and foreign invasions were rife eclipsing monasticism. The lack of a central authority favoured the practice of *tantras* in non monastic settings. This shift opened the door to a variety of views and practices, alarming those who intended to revive monasticism. The division widened between those who insisted both on monastic discipline and on the study of the exoteric aspect of *Buddhism* and the *tāntrikas* who are non-ordained practitioners of the *tantras*, wandering or home based *yogis*. Confusion already prevailed in the *Buddhist* society of the

---

(ii) *Ibid*, Inscription No. 44, Pp. 138-39

<sup>284</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Pp.48-49

<sup>285</sup> Ram, *Op. cit* (f.n. 33), P. 90

period due to roles of *Nāthpanthi* saints and mixing of *tāntric* elements from India. A good number of *Buddhists* had changed their faith because of proselytizing zeal of Śāṅkarācārya and his disciples. It was just a matter of good chance that *Dīpaṅkara* Srijñāna Atiśā visited on this occasion in course of his journey to Tibet and spent one year in doing something remarkable staying at *Tham Bahil* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The monastics argued that *Buddhist* practice had to conform to canonical exoteric models and criticized the *tāntrikas*, accusing them of subverting *Buddhism* with immoral practices such as yogic sexual union and ritual killing. The *tāntrikas* disagreed, rejecting the exoteric monastic path as necessarily inferior to the practice of *tantra* on which they based their legitimacy.

The dispute was settled at crucial time, on the arrival of Atiśā (982-1054)<sup>286</sup>, a famous Indian master from the monastic University of Vikramśīla in Bengal. At that time Tibet was also facing the same problem regarding the *Buddhist* practice. So, to resolve the conflict among supporters of exoterism and esoterism, Ye-shay-ō (ye-shes-'od), the king of Western Tibet and supporter of redeveloping monasticism, invited Atiśā to reside in Tibet. In route to Tibet, he came to Nepal valley through Pālpā and stayed here for a year in 1041 or 1042 A.D at *Tham Bahi*<sup>287</sup>, which is known as *Vikramśīla Mahāvihār* after the name of the monastery from where he came.<sup>288</sup> The king of Nepal (Ananta Kīrti<sup>289</sup>) placed at Atiśā's disposal both his wealth and son (Padmaprabhā).<sup>290</sup> From this quotation, Atiśā's importance at that time can be assumed. He ordained him (the prince) as the monk

<sup>286</sup> For details on visit of Atiśā, please see Sarat Chandra Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1992), Pp. 62- 76

<sup>287</sup> *Tham Bahi* is mentioned as *DharmadhātuMahāvihār* in the colophon of *Prajñāpāramitā* text written in golden letters in *Ranjanā* script, retained there. The monastery is also mentioned as *Rājvihāra* in some *Tibetan* sources and the site is often visited by *TibetanBuddhists* revealing its popularity among them.

<sup>288</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 412

<sup>289</sup> The name is according to *Tibetan* source. Historian Baburam Acarya assumes the king to be Bhāskardeva. As the king erected several *Buddhist* monuments like *HiraṇyavarṇaMahāvihār* (*KwāBāhā*) of Lalitpur, *Keśachandra Pārāvarta Mahāvihāra* (*Itum Bāhā*) and *ThamBahi* of Kathmandu, he had earned infinite fame which mean Ananta Kīrti. The *Tibetans* had the habit of translating words according to the meaning. So, they must have mentioned Ananta Kīrti for Bhāskardeva. Luciano Petech also mentions Atiśā's visit during the reign of Bhāskardeva(1039-1048). See Luciano Petech, *Medieval History of Nepal*(c. 750-1482) (ROMA: Istituto Itallano Per II. Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1984), Pp. 40-43

<sup>290</sup> Sarat Chandra Das, *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1992), P. 71

under the name of Devendra, and also took him as his disciple who afterwards became an adept in *Buddhism*.<sup>291</sup> Through this description, role of Atiśā and his teachings becomes obvious. In Tibet, he was credited to have amalgamated both *sūtra* and *tantra* (Exoterism and Esoterism) in monasticism including both in the path of the *Bodhisattva*, and was successful in second transmission of *Buddhism*. It is also quite likely that he did the same in Nepal during his a year long stay when he composed treatises like *Caryā Saṃgrahapradīp*, *Vimalratna lekha nāma* etc. The *Bodhisattva* ideal provides an ethical framework for integrating the entire range of religious practices. Monasticism is posited as the best basis for a way of life embodying such an ideal, and the most effective means of attaining its goal. In this way, Atiśā was able to propose a vast synthesis of the tradition that included all its teachings (those found in the *sūtras* of both *Śrāvakyāna* and *Mahāyāna*, and the *tantras* of *Vajrayāna*). His view became clear after he wrote his *magnum opus*, *Bodhipatha-pradīpa* in Tibet. Interestingly, the monasticism of Nepal valley is also the combination of *Śrāvakyāna* and *Vajrayāna*, in conformation to Atiśā's view, in which *śrāvaka caryā* is treated prerequisite for following *tantras*. The scheme provided a framework capable of organizing the whole range of *Buddhist* practices, then prevalent. Instead of conceiving of Buddhahood as reached through a gradual and long accumulation of virtues, *tantras* hold that it can be attained much more quickly- even in as single lifetime. *Tāntric* practices and ideas are thereby harmonized with exoteric *Śrāvakyāna* and *Mahāyāna*. The model described by Atiśā in *Bodhipatha-pradīp* unifies the goals of *Hinayāna* and exoteric *Mahāyāna* practices with those of the higher tantrik level by describing the former as preparatory practices that develop the virtues necessary to achieve the higher level. Thus the whole range of *Buddhist* practices can be shown to cohere in a single person's practice. In this way, reformation of monasticism and development of a synthesis between exoteric aspects of *Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyāna* and esoteric elements of *Vajrayāna* are ascribed to the work of Atiśā.

#### 7.3.1.2 *Nepal-maṇḍala* as a popular destination for *Buddhist* masters from neighbouring countries

Tradition of *Buddhist* pilgrimage to Nepal from Tibet intensified and continued well even after the death of Atiśā. In 11<sup>th</sup> century, Mārpā (1012-1098), and his

---

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid*,

chief disciple, Milārepā (AD 1052-1123), travelled different parts of Nepal, and initiated new *Buddhist* tradition (which later became *Kagyū* tradition). Many *Tibetan Buddhist Bhikṣus* followed this example and visited Nepal for their spiritual advancement. Nepal became the place of their primary pilgrimage. Thus, Nepal remained as the forefront of *Mahāyāna Buddhist* faith for the Northern *Buddhist* countries beyond the Himalayas and for those who ventured to see this land of *Buddhist* faith during this period. Peaceful environment of Nepal was another attraction for them. *Buddhist* scholar like rNog-lo-chenp (1059-1109) who learnt from Kāśmir also learnt in Nepal from the *Buddhist* masters like Atulyavajra, Varendraruchi and others.<sup>292</sup> He revised his knowledge and corrected several of his translated works in the light of *Buddhist* theory and practice of Nepalese scholars. It is also learnt that that Mag-cig (AD 1062-1150) was relieved from disease and got mental peace after her visit to Nepal. Her Younger brother, Khon-phubā (AD 1069-1144) also learnt from Phamthinpā or Vagisvarakīrti, and Naggi dhan-phyug grags-pā (Nepalese Yerambā) in Nepal. Khonphubā got knowledge on *Sādhana* of *Vajrayogini tantra* in Nepal. The visit of *Buddhists* from Tibet continued increasing internal trade and foreign trade. Nepalese *Buddhists* also played active role in satisfying Tibetans regarding *Buddhist* teachings. They went on copying *Buddhist* texts on palm leaves. *Buddhist vihāras* became the *alma maters* (centres) of Nepalese *Buddhists*.

The *Newār* community of Nepal served the sole custodian of *Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna* faith. And *Nepal-maṇḍala* became the safe place for *Buddhism* where *Buddhists* of Nepal and Tibet could get homely and warm treatment there. Their mercantile activity and commercial enterprises facilitated them in creating an ideological bridge between India and Tibet.

There was also tradition of visiting Tibet by Nepalese *Buddhist* masters during Medieval period. Biographical accounts of most renowned early Tibetan *Buddhist* scholars revealed that they once studied or were trained in Nepal under supervision of the learned Nepalese masters. Some *Buddhist* monks of Tibet also visited Nepal for the cause of Nepalese *Buddhism*. They are Brogmi, Stang Lo-gzon, Mār-pā lotsāvā, Mār-pā Dopā, Rwa lotsa-ba rDorjegrags, Gos sebtsum. Thus, Nepal served as the channel and meeting venue between Tibet and India. Indian *Buddhist*

---

<sup>292</sup> Ram, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 128

*Paṇḍits* kept coming to Nepal valley either in their route to Tibet or for interaction with Nepalese scholars.

#### 7.3.1.3 Religious situation before Śāṅkarācārya's visit

Before the visit of Śāṅkarācārya the rulers seemed leaned more to *Buddhism*, besides *Nepal-maṇḍala* remained favorite *Buddhist* destination for the *Buddhist* scholars as mentioned above. Harśadeva (1085– 1098 AD)'s leaning towards *Buddhism* was evident from his lyrical composition of *Buddhist* stotra “*stutamati*”<sup>293</sup> which is still recited by the monastics in Nepal. Colophons of several *Buddhist* manuscripts copied then have eulogistic remark in his favour. Similarly, Śivadeva (1098-1126) alias Simhadeva was given the title “*paramsaugata*” for being believer in *Buddhism* and for having worked for its cause.<sup>294</sup> He was declared ‘*pravar-Mahāyānāyāyin*’, staunch follower of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in a manuscript of *Prajñāpāramitā* copied in 1119 A.D.<sup>295</sup> After his death in 1126, his son Indradeva ruled in his footstep. He supported monasticism by constructing and renovating *Buddhist* temples and various monasteries among which *Jayamanohar Mahāvihār* (*Su Bāhā*) of Patan and *Āsana Lokeśwara Mahāvihāra* (*Co Bāhā monastery shrine*) of Kīrtipur are significant.<sup>296</sup>

#### 7.3.1.4 Impact of Śāṅkarācārya's visit

Later, with the arrival of Śāṅkarācārya, the rulers came under the influence of his activity. There is a lot of rumours and controversy regarding Śāṅkarācārya. His visit to *Nepal-maṇḍala* in *Lichchavī* and Medieval period is cited in *Vaṁśāvalis* and in several other contexts. But only one incidence is confirmed of his visit so far. It is through the stone inscription of N.S 262 (1142 A.D) which is now kept at National Museum, Kathmandu. As revealed by the inscription, he was not the one, well known *Adhya Śāṅkarācārya*, but was *Dandi Swāmi* of ‘*Amarddak*’ community of *Agnimatha* of Prayāg under Śāṅkarācārya tradition. He hailed from Prayag and

<sup>293</sup> Phanindra Ratna Bajracharya, *Baudha Stotra Sangraha* (Collection of Buddhist hymns), in Nepal bhāṣā, (Kathmandu: Ashananda Swadharma Vihār, N.S. 1123)

<sup>294</sup> Luciano Petech, *Medieval History of Nepal* (c. 750-1482), (Roma: Istituto Italiano Per II, Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1984), P. 203

<sup>295</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n 279), Pp. 78-79

<sup>296</sup> Dhanavajra Bajracharya, *Madhyakālakā Abhilekha* (Inscriptions of Medieval period, (Kathmandu: Nepal Ra Ashiyali Anusandhan Kendra, CNAS, 2056 B.S), P. 9

used to dwell in Kaśi. He kept visiting *Nepal-maṇḍala* from time to time. He made his first Kathmandu sojourn in 1102 during the reign of king Śivadeva III (1099 - 1126). His second and third visit took place during the reign of Narendradeva and Anandadeva.<sup>297</sup> He became successful in taking the rulers in his favour. He proselytized and initiated many in saivite pantheon and spread *Śaivism*. There is saying that he defeated *Buddhist* masters in *śāstra* debate, made them corrupt by enforcing marriage among monks and nuns, compelled them to remain as householder forsaking monk's garb, burnt *Buddhist* scriptures, and damaged *Buddhist* shrines.<sup>298</sup> After Śankarācārya's arrival, *Buddhist* votive *caityas* were often converted into *śivalinga*. Some scholars even credited him from bringing Paśupatināth temple under *Hindu* priests' custodian from *Buddhist* priests who tended the shrine before. However, such saying is baseless in want of evidence, and is deemed fabricated. But, his impact in his period is considered significant in the history of Nepal mainly regarding religious affairs.

If Śankarācārya's account was true as mentioned in chronicles and hearsays, it becomes obvious that it must have taken the effort of a host of *Buddhist* masters to maintain Nepalese monasticism. Further research is required in this regard. However, the role of *Buddhist* masters such as Kuladutta, and his *twāy pāsā* (close companion) seem significant at that time. Kuladatta's *Kriyāsaṃgraha pañjikā* having the initiation procedure, instructions on *vihāra* construction became the basis of Nepalese monasticism. Tathāgatavajra organized *Vajrācārya saṅgha* of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*.<sup>299</sup> And this *saṅgha* turned out to be the model of *saṅgha* in other *Buddhist saṅghas* of Lalitpur.

**7.3.1.5 Popularity of Great *Buddhist* learning centres: Nālandā and Vikramśīla**  
Throughout the history of *Buddhist* monasticism in Medieval period, tendency was seen among the Nepalese *Buddhists* to be trained at the famous learning centres like Nālandā, Vikramśīla *Buddhist* Universities of India. Several *Buddhist* masters

<sup>297</sup> (i) Gyan Mani Nepal, *Nepalko Mādhyamka Kālko Itihās (Medieval History of Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Makalu & Stationers, 2062 B.S), P.106

(ii) Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 238), P. 138

<sup>298</sup> For other alleged deeds of Śankarācārya against *Buddhism*, please see: Daniel Wright, *History of Nepal*, (Delhi: Adarsh Enterprises, 2000 A.D), *Op.cit.* (f.n. 20), Pp. 118-120

<sup>299</sup> Ryugen Tanemura, *Kuladatta's KriyāSaṃgrahapañjikā*, A critical edition and annotated translation of selected sections, (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, The Netherlands, 2004), P. 7

were known for having been educated at those centres. To name a few examples, there were Līlāvajra, Mahākarunā, ŚāntiŚrī, Chitherpā, Paindainpā, Advayavajra, Vāgisvarakīrti, Phamthinpā brothers- Dharmamati, Duskhorpa etc. From Tibetan source many renowned Nepalese *Buddhists* of that period are known like Phamthinpā, Dharmamati, Duskhorpā, Thamchunpā, Bhadanta Bodhidharma, Śāntibhadra, Sunyasri, Vāgisvara, Vajrapāṇī, Maitripā, Kriṣṇapāda, Dzo-hum, Indraruchi and so forth. All these Nepalese *Buddhist* scholars were well known to Northern *Buddhist* countries and all were the *Vajrācāryas*.<sup>300</sup> Mahākarunā, the teacher of Rvā lotsāvā visited Tibet and likewise many other must have visited Tibet. Advayavajra (978-1030 AD), a Nepalese *Buddhist* contemporary of Nāropā<sup>301</sup> and Mārpā<sup>302</sup> who spent early life in Kapilvastu is well known. His work, *Advayavajra Saṁgraha* having guidelines for Nepalese monasticism is a popular text in Nepal.

It was regarded prestigious to be educated at Nālandā and Vikramśīla *Buddhist* monasteries/Universities. It continued till the collapse of those learning centres. After the destruction of those centres through the hands of Muslim invaders led by Bakhtiyār Khilje in the beginning of thirteenth century, many monks/scholars fled from India (Bengāl and Bihār) along with their religious texts and they took refuge in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Thus, the Nālandā *Buddhist* tradition continued in Nepal. Therefore, most of the scholars held the view that in Nepal the Indian *Buddhist* tradition of Nālandā still survive here in the form of *Newār Buddhism*.

#### 7.3.1.6 Monastic practice by the kings

Adoption of monastic character by the kings, like Śivadeva, Bhāṣkaradeva Rudradeva has been already mentioned above. Similarly, another king, MānadevaIII (1136-1140 AD), became a *Buddhist* monk in *Cakravahāra* and this encouraged the *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal.<sup>303</sup> And the present Mahābodhi shrine of Lalitpur is supposed to be *Cakravahāra* where Mānadeva retired as monk.

---

<sup>300</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), Pp. 98-99

<sup>301</sup> Renowned Indian *siddha* of 11<sup>th</sup> century, who had hundreds of Nepalese and *Tibetan* disciples.

<sup>302</sup> A notable *Tibetan* disciple of Nāropā, and founder of *Kagyū* tradition in Tibet.

<sup>303</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 294), P. 59

### 7.3.1.7 Influx of Indian *Buddhist* monks and masters

*Nepal-maṇḍala* saw the influx of *Buddhist* monks and masters from India, mainly from Bengal side in the beginning of thirteenth century. They were those fled from India to save themselves from the cruelty of Turkish Army led by Ikhtiyarudin Mahammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji who sacked and destroyed the *Buddhist* monasteries including Nālandā and put thousands of the *Bhikṣus* to the sword.<sup>304</sup> Many *Mahantas* (monastic heads), *Paṇḍits* and renowned *Buddhist* scholars like Ratnarakṣita, Raviśrībhadra, Vibhutipandita came to Nepal for asylum after *Muslim* invasion in Eastern India including Bihār and Bengal during the period of first half of thirteenth century. They brought along with them *Buddhist* manuscripts and texts which added to the store of *Sanskrit Buddhist* literature in Nepal. Now, Nepal had the glory of the possession of *Sanskrit Buddhist* literature, most of which were lost from other parts of the globe. Vibhutipandita, disciple of *Kāśmīri Mahā Paṇḍit Śākyaśrībhadra*, the last abbot of the Vikramśīla Monastery studied under Ratnarakṣita and Nepalese *Buddhist* master Buddhaśrī. Later he became the abbot of *Tham bahi* in Nepal.<sup>305</sup> The incidence of landing of Indian *Buddhist* monks and masters contributed to monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

### 7.3.1.8 Dharmaswāmin's account

*Manjuśrī* cult in the *Buddhist* practice of *Nepal-maṇḍala* has connection to Dharmaswāmin, an elite Tibetan *Buddhist* master who visited and stayed here at *Tham Bahi* for eight years during 1226 to 1234 A.D. He was described as the follower of *Manjuśrī*, the *Buddhist* icon of Wisdom in search of whom, he reached Nepal valley. Although issue of *Manjuśrī* arises several times from the origination of Kathmandu valley, as the teacher of Guṇākara who ordained Śāntikarācārya, in the case of Śāntideva (the renowned *Buddhist* master, as mentioned above) and so forth Dharmaswāmin's episode firmly established its cult in Nepal valley. In Nepal he learnt under Nepalese *Buddhist* masters Ratnaraksita who stayed near *Svayambhū* and Ravindra.<sup>306</sup> In *Svayambhū purāṇa*, name Dharmaśrī Mitra is used in place of Dharmaswāmin, attributing legendary characters. It is still a matter of research

<sup>304</sup> J.L. Mehta, *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India*, (Vol. I: 1000 – 1526 A.D.), Reprint 1983, (New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1979), P. 81

<sup>305</sup> Tanemura, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 299), P. 7

<sup>306</sup> George N. Roerich, *Biography of Dharmaswāmin* (Chag-Lotsaba Chos-rje-dPal), (Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Institute, 1959), Pp. 53-56



whether *Manjuśrī* was a legendary figure (*Buddhist* deity) or a historical person. Dilli Raman Regmi, a Nepalese historian points out that there were monasteries in Nepal both with and without celibate monks when Dharmaswāmi, stayed in Nepal from 1226 to 1234 A.D.<sup>307</sup>

Around 1277 AD, another *Mahā Paṇḍit* named Sricandra or Chandrapal<sup>308</sup>, and Birmati *Vajrācārya*<sup>309</sup> were the famous *Buddhist* master.

#### 7.3.1.9 Period of hardship (Internal and external scuffle, Natural calamities and Samsudin Attack)

The early Medieval period in the history of Nepal had a remarkable and decisive impact on *Buddhist* monasticism. though period was also known for fatal upheavals like devastating multiple earthquakes killing even the rulers like Abhayamalla (in N.S. 375, 1255 AD), successive *Khasiya* invasions led by Jitārimalla (1287-1288 AD), by Ripumalla (1313 AD), and by Adityamalla (1328 AD) and *Karnata Doya* invasions (1291-1324 AD) led by Chadreśwara, a minister of Harsimhadeva and by Harasimhadeva himself (1324-1325), then famines, epidemics, internal and external fracas among the rulers and political instability, disturbance resulting in dual or triple ruler-ships and Muslim attack led by Samsudin (in 1346 and 1350 AD).<sup>310</sup> Samsudin force dismantled *Svayambhū caitya*, destroyed big stupa of Pimbahāl Patan, other monuments and put almost all monasteries to ash during the reign of the king Rājdeva in 470 N.S.<sup>311</sup> Such critical situation brought by several factors must have compelled the people take refuge in *Buddhism*, the *Dharma* serving mankind alleviating worldly suffering. *Buddhist* monastic establishments repaired their monasteries, rebuilt their artefacts devastated by multiple attack by Samsudin in 1349 and revived their popular festivals. All repair works were accomplished by the *Buddhist* communities, mainly merchants and monks. Several inscriptions like Lalitpur Pimbāhāl inscription<sup>312</sup> (of 479 N.S.) on a *caitya*, Lalitpur

<sup>307</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), Pp. 1-14

<sup>308</sup> According to Inscription No. 42 of Dhanavajra's Purvamadhakal, the name was Chandra, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), P. 134

<sup>309</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 294), P. 88; Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), P. 163

<sup>310</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 238), Pp. 142-148

<sup>311</sup> Dhanavajra Bajracharya "Samsudinko Ākraman" in Chittaranjan Nepali, Dineshraj Panta *et. al* (Ed.), *Nepalko Itihāsika Vividha Pakṣa*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Rājakiya Pragya Pratisthān, B.S. 2058), Pp. 115-123

<sup>312</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), Pp. 150-51

Nhubāhāl inscription<sup>313</sup> of 481 N.S. on a *caitya*, *Svayambhū* inscription of 492 N.S. (on of stone paltes arranged in a row towards north of *Svayambhū* etc, shed light on repairing works done after destruction made by Samsudin attack upon *Buddhist* shrine. *Khasa* rulers in the western Nepal, being themselves *Buddhist* though they had made multiple invasions to the valley, have proved to be less devastating. Implicitly they have benefited in some way to the *Buddhist* monasticism of Kathmandu Valley.

#### 7.3.1.10 Socio-religious policy of Jayasthitimalla (1382 – 1395 A.D)

Entry of Jayasthitimalla in political scenario in the last quarter of 14<sup>th</sup> century was considered important from several perspectives. It was well planned by the royal members of *Doya* regime mainly the queen Deval Devi when they fled from their centre, Simrongarh fearing the attack of *Muslim* invasion led by Sultan Muhammad Tughlaq and took refuge in Bhaktapur. They brought Taleju related *Hindu* culture which is still extant in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. When they became dominant in power, the result was the enthronement of Jayasthitimalla, their relative who was totally from Hindu background Jayasthitimalla's time is regarded a turning phase in the history of Nepal. Soon after he gained exclusive power, he imposed *Hindu* policy and introduced caste system (*Varṇa* system). He was charged of forcing *Buddhist* celibate monks and nuns to marry and lead householder life and also to follow imposed caste structure. But, the saying has no ground, since house holding monastic system already prevailed before his period. It so revealed that his religious policy had not affected much *Buddhist* community. The *varṇa* system was confined to *Hindu* community only. It seemed due to strong solidarity and ground of *Buddhist* community, he did not dare to apply his religious policy upon them. However, caste discrimination and caste-wise occupation system came into play among the *Buddhists* also. Leinhard<sup>314</sup> considers that hierarchical social structure based on caste system, imposed by the Jayasthitimalla, which is originally the characteristic of *Hinduism* developed in the course of time among the *Buddhists* of Kathmandu valley. He held the view that this process had begun long before the 15<sup>th</sup> century but it accelerated when more and more *Hindu* religious observances became absorbed into ritualistic *Vajrayāna*. Due to Sthitimalla's policy, then

---

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid*, P. 153

<sup>314</sup> Leinhard, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 8), P. 110

political situation went in favour of *Hinduism*, and this should have affected *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal.

#### 7.3.1.11 Summation of accounts on Early Medieval Period

In early medieval period *Buddhism* and *Buddhist* monasticism flourished, providing a new dimension to both the material and spiritual life of the people of Nepal though the period is often highlighted as dark period in the history. Probably the growing isolation of *Buddhist Newār* communities constantly strengthened and nourished by new stimuli that led to the unique development of the Nepalese form of *Buddhism*.<sup>315</sup> During the period *Buddhism* had undergone notable changes that had wide-ranging consequences. Out of the many changes, three developments are worth mentioning. (1) During the early medieval period, *Buddhism* already incorporated *Tantra*, which was of autochthonous origin. This development led to the establishment of the fast growing *Buddhist* sect called *Vajrayāna* based on the concept of mystical power derived from ritual exercise in the form of *siddhi*. (2) Secondly, the period saw decline of celibate monks, disappearance of *Bhikṣuṇīs* and growth of house-holder monks. (3) Thirdly, early medieval period witnessed the efflorescence of *Buddhist Mahāvihāras* which led to firm institutionalization of *Buddhist* monasticism as a different current of religion. By then, these *Mahāvihāras* had become the centre of all sort of religious activities led by house-holder monks. Outcome was disappearance of *Hinayāna* (*Sarvāstivāda*) while *Mahāyāna* continued to prosper as it easily assimilated new stimuli and “the blend of monastic *Buddhism* with the *Mahāyāna* and the *Vajrayāna* principles, with the quaint mixture of *Tantric* Tradition. This is now known as *Newār Buddhism*. This is a unique form of *Buddhism* in Nepal”.<sup>316</sup>

In spite of political instability and adverse condition during early Medieval period, *Buddhism* continued due to support of local *Newār Buddhists* with adoption of some major changes to suit the changing situation of that time. Otherwise, the religious situation in *Nepal-maṇḍala* for a long time was similar to that of pre-Islamic India, before 12<sup>th</sup> century. There were many schools and sects of late *Buddhism* at work in Nepal and the country experienced a great and final influx of

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid* (f.n. 8), P. 109

<sup>316</sup> Harischandra Lal Singh, *Buddhism in Nepal*, (Lalitpur: Indu Chhapakhana Pvt. Ltd., 1990), P.45

*Buddhist* forces in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries when Islam invaded northern India. On one side while *Buddhism* finally ceased on Indian soil, Nepal, on the other side, became a central sanctuary for monks, scholars and artists from India, who had crucial effect on both the religions and artistic life of the *Buddhist Newārs*. Though *Buddhist* contact with India ceased, this period was marked with the revival and growth of *Buddhist* cultural activities in Kathmandu Valley. *Buddhists* in Nepal were enjoying an era of progress and fresh lease of life as the mass migration of Indian *Buddhists* ousted by the Turkish invasion was mostly destined to Nepal. In this way Nepal played the unique role of a cultural buffer unit between India and Nepal. Thus Nepal later emerged as the custodian of the *Buddhist* scriptures, since it became an abode of *Buddhist* learning and art for Northern *Buddhist* regions.

### 7.3.2 Later Medieval period (1397 – 1768 A.D)

Once the designated pattern of monastic practice was fixed in early medieval period, the *Buddhists* concentrated on developing their literary wealth on *Buddhism*. Numerous *caryā* songs were composed, several *jātaka* and *avadāna* stories were domesticated or appropriated with incorporation of Nepalese sites, characters, and references.<sup>317</sup> Many eminent *Buddhist* masters evolved during later medieval period. Besides, several *Buddhist* texts were compiled and copied. Nepalese created their own basis of monasticism in the form of *Svayambhū purāṇa*. During this period, *vihārās* (later *Mahāvihāras*) continued to play an important role in educating people and preaching *Buddhist* teaching. The monks who resided in them also used to educate the youths and masses who came to hear them. In order to study Nepalese *Buddhism*, *Buddhist* art and architecture, many scholars from India, China and Tibet kept visiting Nepal and stayed in various Nepalese monasteries. Hence, this period (later medieval) can be regarded as the period of *Buddhist* scholasticism or classical period. The *Bāhās* and *Bahis* (monasteries) were centres of religious activities, education and cultural activities in the Medieval period. Many *Lichchavī* monasteries like *Gūn Vihāra* of Sānkhu, *Svayambhū Vihāra* and *Tham Vihāra* of Kathmandu, *Rudravārṇa Mahāvihāra* of Patan must have been renovated several times in medieval period. *Chusyā bahāl*, *Musyā bahāl*, *Padmachakra Mahāvihāra*, *Dharmachakra Mahāvihāra*, are some of the prominent *Vihāras* of the medieval age. Dilli Raman Regmi has given list of

---

<sup>317</sup> For details, please see Todd Lewis, *Popular narratives of Newār Buddhism*, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23)

more than forty monasteries of that time.<sup>318</sup> Most of the monasteries numbering above hundred which are still extant today were founded in that period, and the whole of activities in the monasteries as we know it today developed in that period.

Major changes that took place in *Buddhist* monasticism during Medieval period are often attributed either to Śankarācārya (*Mathādhiśa* or throne-holder) or to the king Jayasthitimalla (1382-1395 AD). Śankarācārya made multiple visits and stayed in *Nepal-maṇḍala* in mid 11<sup>th</sup> century for propagation of *Śaivism*. He is supposed to have been successful in taking then rulers in his favour and *Buddhists* were forced to marry and lead lay-life. *Buddhism* remained free from adversities in the valley though personality like Śankarācārya severely tried to abolish it. But the *Buddhists* could not pursue openly the monk life in the unfavourable situation of that time and made major changes in their monasticism. Regarding Jayasthitimalla's concern, he imposed *Hindu* policy and introduced caste system (*Varṇa* system). He is blamed to have forced *Buddhist* celibate monks to marry and lead householder life and also to follow imposed caste structure. This caused turning point in the *Buddhist* tradition. Till yet, most of the scholars held such views regarding the changes in the course of Nepalese monasticism. But, the present study reveals something different. The changes must have taken place due to several causes which will be dealt in succeeding chapters. Most importantly, the critical situation as mentioned above caused by natural catastrophes, epidemics, rifts in political power foreign invasion, internal conflicts, evils of administrative bureaucracy must have been responsible for such changes. Though they were factors for misery on one hand, they widened the faith of the ruling and the ruled class in *Buddhism* bringing in the solidarity and zeal to stick to the *Dharma* by any means, on the other hand. Thus, the changes were inevitable according to prevailing situation. The *Malla* rulers succeeding *Buddhist* *Thakurīs* were also responsible for retention of changes made during adverse situation and the further changes, and their continuation in *Buddhist* monasticism as they showed apathy to *Buddhism* favouring *Hinduism*.<sup>319</sup> Therefore truly speaking *Buddhist* monasticism was already on the verge of undergoing major changes due to several factors when Śankarācārya appeared in the scene and Jayasthitimalla overlaid Hinduisation policy in Nepal. Speculative debates

---

<sup>318</sup> Jagdish Chandra Regmi, *Nepalko Dhārmika Itihāsa- Prāchin Ra Mallakāla (Religious History of Nepal- Ancient and Malla period)*, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2037 B.S), P. 173

<sup>319</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), Pp. 19-22

regarding persecution of *Buddhists* by Śāṅkarācārya<sup>320</sup> and so called untoward situation for the *Buddhists* brought by *Hindu* leaning Jayasthitimalla, which were often very much highlighted by previous scholars with exaggeration are less productive. Moreover, *Vajrayāna* played an important role in the development of *Buddhism* in Nepal. So much so that during the medieval period while the country was in crisis politically or socially, the *Vajrayānī ācāryas* did not fail to represent their clients or *Buddhist* followers to the path of salvation. It helped to maintain people to people relation and conserve *Buddhism* from collapse.

### 7.3.2.1 Vanratna (1384-1469 A.D)

*Nepal-maṇḍala* remained a popular destination for *Buddhists* of neighbouring countries in the Medieval period. The last Indian *Buddhist* scholar who stayed in Nepal was Vanratna of seventeenth century who resided at *Pintu Bahi* (*Gopichanda Mahāvihāra*). Till Vanratna(1384-1469)'s stay in Kathmandu valley, Nepal enjoyed full development of *Buddhist* monasticism. He was the last Indian Bengali scholar to have resided in Nepal. In fact, he chose *Nepal-maṇḍala* as the centre of *Buddhist* practice which had already declined in India. Several of his biographies from Tibetan and Nepalese sources reveal that in honour of his proficiency in *Buddhism* and considering his religious deeds he was donated by the rulers a monastery named *Gopichand Mahāvihār*, where he stayed till his death.<sup>321</sup> The monastery, locally known as *Pintu Bahi* still exists in Lalitpur. It was Yakṣamalla's period and Vanaratna is said to have good relation with the king and to have taught his sons. Vanratna continued *vajrayānic* practice establishing his scholarship with many eminent *Buddhist* scholars from Tibet, India and Nepal and also received important visualization through his practice. He frequented his visit to Tibet from Kathmandu. It is believed that till medieval period celibate monasticism existed side by side with non celibate monasticism. Vanratna was mentioned as a popular esoteric monk (i.e. *Vajrayāna* monk) having his female

<sup>320</sup> Śāṅkarācārya's account has event of burning of *Buddhist* scriptures and killing of *Buddhist* monks, forcing *Buddhist* monks and nun to marry, defeating *Buddhist ācāryas* in debate, dismantling *Buddhist* monuments. Such account is based mainly on a fabrication of European colonial mind initially propagated by Brian H. Hodgson and subsequent European scholar-writers like D. Wright, F. Tucker, S. Levi and so forth –Rajendra Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), Pp. 72-73

<sup>321</sup> Punya Prasad Parajuli, "Mahāpundit Vanratnako Nepali Boudha Dharmamā Yogadān" in *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Vol. 37, No. 2, July 2010, (Kathmanu: CNAS, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, 2010), Pp. 261-282

ritual partner who was considered his wife.<sup>322</sup> This shows Nepalese monasticism was already in the grip of *Vajrayāna* monastic tradition. Moreover, the religious reforms caused by role of influential *Buddhist* masters like Atīśā Dīpaṅkar Śrījnāna, Dharmaswāmin, Vānratna etc also must have been the factors for major changes in monastic tradition that occurred in Medieval period.

### 7.3.2.2 Division of *Nepal-maṇḍala* and its effect

The king Yakṣamalla (1428-1440 A.D.)'s period is considered important because *Nepal-maṇḍala* broke into three separate states afterwards. He constructed the temples of *Minnāth*, *Padmapāṇi Lokeśwara* and some monasteries. From his time *Lokeśwara* cult became more prominent in *Buddhist* tradition. *Lokeśwar* worship turned as an important avocation of the monastics. *Lokeśwara* shrines and *Lokeśwara* are tended by the monastics. After the death of King Yakṣamalla (1428-1440 A.D), the Kathmandu valley was politically divided into Kāntipur, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur and his successors ruled separately. The succeeding kings of the three states had faced undeclared competition among themselves. They kept vying each other in most of the issues. As a consequence, there established separate shrines of *Avlokiteśwara*, *Kumārī* (Living goddess), and so forth, related festival tradition etc in Kāntipur, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. After break down of the valley into three separate states, there were no actual celibate monks though some monastics were recorded with the title name *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu*s as revealed by inscriptions of that period. Patan *Guita bahi* inscription<sup>323</sup> of 1514 A.D (of Ratnamalla period) mentions about *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* Jakharaj and his wife who installed *Mahākāla* image in the monastery in memory of their late son, Vijayasinha Bhāro. Literal meaning of *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* is celibate monk. Remarkably, the inscription clearly shows that he was married man with wife and son but was from dynasty of celibate monks. It makes clear that by the period celibate monks had been turned into house holder practitioners but they took pride in being celibate monks in the past.

<sup>322</sup> A well known hand drawn painting of Vanratna dated 1468 showed his female ritual partner as the main figure, distributing alms to others. She was described as Vanratna's wife in the caption of the painting by the writer, Gautam Vajra Bajracharya. For details please see: Gautam Vajra Bajracharya, "Crown Jewel of *Newār* Painting: Discovery of a masterpiece" in Pratapaditya Pal (ed.), *Nepal, Old images, New insights*, (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2004), Pp. 74-76

<sup>323</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), Pp. 1-2

However, some scholars held their opinion that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Patan still had about twenty five monasteries in which the monks, pledged to the older rule, and kept strictly to celibacy.<sup>324</sup> A stone inscription<sup>325</sup> of 1643 A.D. of Patan *Kwā bāhāl tole Chobunani* mentions about installation of *Dharmadhātu Vagiswara* by a *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* named *Śrī Narendradeva* while his father was mentioned as just *Bhikṣu Sṛideva*. It may have indicated that the father joined later the celibate *Bhikṣu* community or the word *Brahmacarya* got missing. If former assumption was true, the opinion held by the scholars becomes justifiable. Inscriptions like one from *Chyāsaltale Lukabahil* in the *kwā-pā dyo* shrine (of 1663 A.D.)<sup>326</sup> mentions name of a number of donors who were addressed *Bhikṣus*<sup>327</sup>, can also be considered in its support. They could be celibate monks since they were not called *Vajrācārya* or *Śākya* or *Śākyaabhikṣu* or *Śākyaavaṁśa* or *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* which were often used to denote married householder monks.

Kings Śivasinghamalla, Pratāpmalla (1641-1674) of Kāntipur were inclined to *Buddhism* though they officially follow Hinduism. They renovated and made offering to *Svayambhū Mahācaitya*. Pratāpmalla added at *Svayambhū* shrine important monument pieces like Big golden *Vajra* in front of *Akshobya tathāgata* image, Pratappur and Anantpur, on either side of *Svayambhū caitya*. *Svayambhū* is the emblem of *Newār* monastic tradition. Siddhanarsingha (1619-1652), Sṛnivāsmalla of Lalitpur were devotees of *Karuṇāmaya*, the *Buddhist* deity of compassion. They are important in strengthening monasticism in Nepal.

### 7.3.2.3 Role of Śṛnivāsmalla

Period of Sṛnivāsmalla is noteworthy to know the condition of *Buddhism* in late medieval time for he became the only influential ruler of in the medieval period after division of *Nepal-maṇḍala* into three separate states. After the death of his

<sup>324</sup> Leinhard, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 8), P. 110

<sup>325</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 92

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 132-133

<sup>327</sup> Name of the *Bhikṣus* as mentioned were *BhikṣuŚrī Amritchandraju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Jesinghaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Punachandraju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Vijayarajdevaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Purnajotiju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Maniratnaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Devaratnaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Dhammasinghju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Jayadevaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Chintaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Jivadevaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Indrasinghaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Dharaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Chandraju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Amardevaju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Chandra*, *BhikṣuŚrī Jyotiju*, *BhikṣuŚrī Dhanjoti*, and *BhikṣuŚrī Manjudeva*



rivals, Pratāpmalla of Kathmandu in 1674 A.D and Jagatprakāshmallā of Bhaktapur in 1672 A.D. he became successful in maintaining his control over the three states-Kāntipur, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur. He had ruled as his wished. His dream of becoming ‘*Nepāleśwar*’ (head of entire Nepal) was coming to be true. Therefore, the situation of *Buddhism* bears significance in the monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Inclination of the king towards *Buddhism* had far reaching influence in Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition. He was the staunch devotee of *Karuṇāmaya*. He declared *Lokanātha* as his tutelary deity (*Iṣṭa devatā*) and had it printed in the coins. Its festival established as the state festival. Later his son Yognarendramalla and other *Malla* kings also followed his track. Three inscriptions of his time among many seem very important to know the situation of *Buddhist* practices in his period. They are (i) Lion royal throne Inscription<sup>328</sup> of 1666 A.D (ii) *Samvatsar Loha* Inscription<sup>329</sup> of 1672 A.D, and (iii) Inscription<sup>330</sup> of *Matsendra bahāl*, Yavatole, Bungamati, of 1675 A.D.

(i) Lion royal throne Inscription: It is in the gilded Lion royal throne which is kept on annual display on *Jesṭha Pūrṇimā* day, (full moon day in the month of May). The inscription shows that it was offered to the king during *Buddhist* religious event by a monastic practitioner named *Śakyavarmśa* Sṛī Jodhaju of Mahāboudha, *Oku Bāhāl* and that it can be had on rental basis by anybody for such purpose. The inscription sheds light on then *Buddhist* practice. There was *Buddhist* culture of celebration of grand offering ‘*dāna*’ to the monastics and deities in presence of the head of the state, the king. This is called *Samyak Mahādāna*. On this occasion the king is highly revered and is made seated in a golden throne. The said throne was also used in one such occasion when the thing Sṛinivasmalla presided over. It is evident that the even was often celebrated in those times. But, it was difficult to have made such costly and painstaking throne. Therefore, the throne was made available to the organizers or the main charity maker on rental basis so that he was facilitated. The rental charge used to go to the carpenter and the metal workers who maintained the throne in condition. The throne has lion images on either sides standing upon elephant. On the *torāṇa* like upper part is the image of *Garuḍa* which is surmounted by two serpents.

<sup>328</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), Pp. 151-152

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 170-181

<sup>330</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 191-194

(ii) *Samvatsar Loha* Inscription: It is a stone inscription stuck to wall of eastern gate of *Rato Matshendranātha* temple of Patan. It appears as if it were an article of then constitution. The inscription shows how much the king was concerned about *Bungamā Lokeśwar*. He promulgated special rules for smooth conduction of chariot festival, bathing ceremony of *Bungamā Lokeśwar* and for necessary arrangement for the same. He made rules to avoid any possible hindrance related to activities concerning *Matshendranātha*. Even kings and courtiers were asked to follow certain rules. Any defiance of duty assigned was deemed crime. The king formed many *Guthīs* and donated land and income source for these causes. It would be proper to mention here that these activities related to *Bungamā Lokeśwar* including bathing ceremony and chariot pulling festival are still continuing today. And most of the rules mentioned are still being followed.

(iii) Inscription of *Matṣendra bahāl*, Yavatole, Bungamati: It also throws light in the socio-religious practice prevalent in that period. It concerns about the rules concerning *Buddhist* observance called *Mās-upasan* or *Māsopavāsavrata* which runs for the whole month, usually the month of *Gunlā*. It is an austere practice mostly observed for religious justice by family suffered married women at the shrines of *Lokeśwaras- Karuṇāmaya's* temple of Bungamati, *Anandādi Lokeśwara's* site of *Co Bāhā*, Kirtipur, and *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Lalitpur. Husbands of those women in *Māsopavāsa* observance should come to receive them. If a husband or any family member from husband's side fails to receive his wife at the *vrata* site, divorce is legally ensured between the couple, and this verdict is socially accepted. Receiving the *vrata* keeper by any member from husband side at the end of *Gunla* month proves faultlessness of the woman.<sup>331</sup> Thus this *vrata* has social importance in addition to religious one. During late medieval period, the devotees keeping the observance of this *vrata* were so many in number that the state promulgated rules regarding the *vrata* through the inscription. It is known from the inscription that there were thirty advising personnels (*Nāyike*) deputed for providing instructions regarding the *vrata* in Bungamati only. It indicates popularity of *Buddhist* observances and their importance.<sup>332</sup>

<sup>331</sup> Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya, "Buddha Dharma Ra Lichchavikalin Samaj: Ek Adhyayan (Buddhism and *Licchavī* Society- A Study)" - a seminar paper presented at Conference on Buddhist Culture 2055, organized by Lotus Research Centre in 1998 (Kartik 15-19, 2055), P. 13

<sup>332</sup> For details, please see: Bajracharya, *Madhyakālā Abhilekha*, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), Pp 191-194

The inscriptions reveal a good condition of *Buddhist* tradition and monasticism during late Medieval period. The religious ground set by the kings like Sidhinarsingmalla, Pratapmalla and Srinivasmalla was followed by other successor kings. *Karuṇāmaya-Lokaṇāth* appeared in coins and salutation in the beginning of Inscriptions.<sup>333</sup> *Karuṇāmaya* and *Svayambhū* shrines become more popular. The kings were seen participating in *Buddhist* religious ceremonies conducted by the monastics.<sup>334</sup> Numerous monastic and public donors were found to have built additional monumental pieces in the monasteries, renovated the shrines and monasteries. They also built a new *caitya*. There were many inscriptions which concern about carrying out annual functions like *Busādan*.<sup>335</sup>

#### 7.3.2.4 Summation of accounts on Later Medieval Period

Though celibate monasticism dwindled, it still continued in limited scope in later Medieval period. On the other hand non celibate monasticism was on the rise. Popularity of non celibate monasticism exercised by house holder monks grew as they needed not depend fully upon other for their sustenance.

Advance development of *Buddhist* monasticism in Medieval period can also be understood through establishment of numerous monasteries, and the contemporary monastic art which can still be seen. Existing *vihāras* of today are of Medieval origin. *Newār* monastics mostly followed blameless profession of monastic art-crafts, creation of which was also a part of their practice. This tradition of making fine arts gave rise to emergence of noted *Newār* artists like Arniko who became famous in China and Tibet during 13<sup>th</sup> century. Transformed new monasticism evolved in early Medieval period and continued throughout whole medieval period and is still continuing. Therefore, early Medieval period can be called the period of assimilation as Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition assimilated various tenets from then

<sup>333</sup> Manimandap inscription of Yoganarsinghamalla dated 1700 AD, Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 296), *Madhyakālākā Abhilekha*, Pp. 321-322,

<sup>334</sup> Participation of Śrinivāsmalla has been already mentioned above. The inscription dated 1696 AD of Patan *Okubahāl* Yetalivi Chivā chowk divulges participation by Yognarendramalla, the king of Lalitpur, and Bhulalendramalla of Kāntipur in the religious observance conducted by the monastics, *Śākyavamśas* (D. Bajracharya, *Ibid*, P. 312)

<sup>335</sup> *Busādan* is the annual function done as anniversary of important events like installation of deity image, *caitya* etc. For other details on religious activities during Medieval period, please see Dhanavajra's *Madhyakālākā Abhilekha*, *Op.cit.* (f.n.296)

existing *Buddhist* sects mainly *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Sarvāstivāda*, *Mahāyāna*, *Vajrayāna* and so forth, and gave rise to its unique form of monasticism. Nepalese *Buddhists* formatted and designed their own tradition, yet based upon then available *śāstras*.

#### 7.4 Modern Period (1769 A.D onwards)

The period with the rise of *Shāha* king Prithwinarayan Shāha and then-after is the modern period. The *Nepal-maṇḍala* was conquered by Gurkha king Prithwinarayan Shāha in 1768 defeating *Malla* kings also called *Newār* kings and thus *Malla* dynasty was replaced by *Shāha* dynasty in Nepalese history. Prithwinārāyan Shāh is also credited to unification of small states of into one single big country Nepal. He was known as a crafty politician, a valiant soldier, a far seeing tactician, cautious in the working out of his plans, stubborn in executing them, dispassionately barbarous or generous after mature deliberation, frank or disloyal excelling over his adversaries in perfidy as well as in strength.<sup>336</sup> Since he was from *Hindu* lineage, his ascendance to throne was not favourable for *Buddhism*. Condition of Patan, a *Buddhist* city after his conquest shows a situation of *Buddhism* in the beginning of modern period which had to continue further. At the surrender of Patan to Prithwinarayan Shāh in 1768, the nobility and principal men were murdered, and the greatest barbarities were practiced on the unfortunate inhabitants, who being mostly *Buddhists*, received but little mercy at the hands of their *Hindu* conquerors. The royal palace was dismantled; the dwellings of wealthy citizens were robbed of everything valuable that they contained, and even the temples were not spared. Their accumulated wealth was seized, and revenues of church lands owned by *Guthi* which had from time immemorial been regarded as sacred, were appropriated either wholly or in part of the *Shāha* government. In many instances, where he had spared the sacred revenues, his son Ran Bahadur and afterwards Prime minister Bhimsen Thapa appropriated them. As a result Patan had lost all its social as well as political importance. The spirit of its inhabitants appeared to have been completely crushed by the loss of their independence, the plunder or destruction of all which they held most sacred. The consequence was that the city of Patan had gradually but steadily declined; its palaces, public

---

<sup>336</sup> Sylvian Levi, *Le Nepal* its English translation *Nepal- "Historical Study of a Hindu Kingdom"*, in *Ancient Nepal*, a journal of Department of Archaeology, April 1973- Dec 1989 – Jan 1990), edited by Ramesh Jung Thapa, P. 65

buildings, and most of its temples had fallen into a ruinous and dilapidated state; while the poor *Newārs* had no the means to restore them, and seemed stricken with a sort of apathy which prevented their attempting even to check the further decay.

Overwhelmed by his triumphs Prithwinārāyan Shāha even tried to keep his influence over Tibet and plundered and hoarded treasures in the monasteries. His footstep was followed by his sons and grandsons for next two hundred plus years. During their rule, in early years, Shāha kings were found busy with power capturing game among father, son, brothers, mother and uncles within own family members rather than building the nation. According to Levi, the heirs of Prithwinarayan Shāh, were connected to pathology than to history; they were degenerates of various types, nervous, irritable, sanguinary impulsive, alcoholic, erotic and idiots; a long series of minorities, leaves the child king in the dreadful hands of an uncle or a mother or minister jealous of the throne and interested in prolonging the child's complete exhaustion, by precocious debaucheries. At times they would attack to Tibet China or to British India and learn lessons from their retaliation. China's retaliation imposed Nepal submission of levy once in every five years as a tribute to the Emperor who was the incarnation of the divine *Manjuṣree*.<sup>337</sup> Disgusted with the Gurkha's bad faith and intrigue, British India declared war on Nepal in 1814. Two years of campaign equally honorable and glorious to both and also equally marked out by disastrous failures, made lose Nepal one third of its territory and come to the table to sign Sugauli pact in 1816. This treaty outlined a well defined frontier between two countries and made necessary presence of a British resident near Nepalese court, and imposed no employment of any foreign subjects without the permission of British Government.

After the medieval period, the tradition of constructing Vihāra, shrines and offering of charities, in consecration of the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha declined. Therefore, the period from the latter half on the 18th century to the first quarter of the twentieth century is the darkest period in the history of Buddhism in Nepal. Causes mainly attributed are the dominant influence of Hinduism, lack of vigour in the Saṅgha and among the leading Buddhist communities and above all corruption in monasterie.<sup>338</sup>

---

<sup>337</sup> *Ibid*, P. 66

<sup>338</sup> Singh, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 316), P.19

Above mentioned stanza is from a local text. Most of the authors express similar views. The saying bears some truth if not all.

Modern period begins with the unification of Nepal by Prithinārāyan Shāh but *Nepal-maṇḍala* did not cease to represent the whole nation in most of the issues including religiosity. After Medieval period *Buddhism* no longer renewed or reformed itself but just persisted. What had been established and fixed in *Buddhist* monasticism during Medieval period were just carried on as they were. The status of *Buddhism* was very volatile and weak in *Nepal-maṇḍala* in modern period. Majority of the people were *Buddhist* but the kings were *Hindu*. The administration and legislation were highly influenced by *Hindu* concept. So, there was a predominance of *Hinduism* at the court of Nepal. But the people were mostly *Buddhist* and there was therefore the predominance of *Buddhist* practice and culture in public level. Frequent addresses to Nepal by Hodgson and other renowned scholars as the country of *Baudha*<sup>339</sup> also proved that there was a strong hold of *Buddhism* in the society. But, *Buddhist* monasticism went on declining.

The rulers, regimes of *Shāha* and *Rānā* became adherents of *Hinduism*, and *Buddhism* ceased to develop further. With the rise of *Shāhas* and their annexation of the Kathmandu valley, there came a change in polity. Kathmandu was declared the capital of Modern Nepal in 1768. The valley remained the centre of *Shāha* administration. Political situation went against *Buddhism*. The rulers went to the extent of declaring Nepal the only *Hindu* country in the world. They remained busy in (1) keeping sway of Gorkhanization resulting in attempted marginalization of local *Newār* inhabitants, (2) the act of land confiscation in the name land reform policy which affected *Guthī* conduction of *Buddhist Saṅghas*, and (3) Nepal-Tibet wars.<sup>340</sup> *Rānās* stood clearly in favour of *Hinduism* and their period (1846-1950

---

<sup>339</sup> Donald S. Lopez, "The ambivalent exegete: Hodgson's contributions to the study of *Buddhism*" in the book edited by David M. Waterhouse, *The Origins of Himalayan Studies*, (London: Routledge Curzon, 2005), Pp. 44-45

<sup>340</sup> Nepal-Tibet War was fought between Nepal and Tibet-China coalition from 1789-1792. The war was initially fought between Nepal and Tibet over trade dispute related to a long standing problem of counterfeit coins. However, the initial Nepalese success in subduing the *Tibetans*, who were under the protection of the Chinese, escalated the war by involving the Chinese. A peace treaty ended the continuity of war. War ensued again second time after the middle of nineteenth century. The Nepalese-Tibetan War was fought from 1855 to 1856 in Tibet between the forces of the *Tibetan* government and the invading Nepalese army. The rulers remained busy in the war and handling Tibet issues.

A.D) was a period of intensified Hinduization. A quotation from a popular book reveals then intensity of Hinduization –

In the Hindustan we look in vain for any traces of *Hindu* legislation or government, the *Moslem* conquerors have everywhere swept them away. And if we wish to enquire what are the feature of *Hindu* system of Jurisprudence and Judicature it is in Nepal we must seek for the answer..... In the *Buddha* country, the country of the *Newārs*, the administration was purely *Hindu* ‘absolutely untouched by foreign for several centuries, and in it he very justly recognized the outcome of ancient Indian *Brahmānic* laws.’<sup>341</sup>

The quotation reveals though the rulers and their administration were purely *Hindu*, the people were *Buddhist*. Open *Buddhist* activities were restricted at that time. Monks were not allowed to propagate *Buddhism*, to summon *Buddhist* discourse. Many monks had been charged for spreading *Buddhism* and had been sent into exile during *Rānā*’s regime. There was oral tradition that many *Buddhist* manuscripts were burnt or buried or destroyed by *Rānā* Prime minister Jung Bahadur.

No more new monasteries were built. Growth of *Buddhist* scholasticism came to a halt. *Buddhist* monasticism just continued to exist. Therefore, modern period can be regarded as the period of continuation of *Buddhist* monasticism. Nepalese *Buddhists* had to satisfy themselves with what they were having in the past. Religious situation deteriorates further in the name of modernization. New generation became more materialistic and paid less heed to the religion. Awareness about importance of old heritage and tradition begin to lose. Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition got entangled in rites and rituals. The sound philosophy behind such rites and rituals became incomprehensible as adequate attention was not given. The state already ceased to provide any kind of assistance or co-operation to the *Buddhists*. As a consequence, even the adherents of old and indigenous Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition were affected. There was no critical situation as it was in early medieval period. In Modern period during *Shāha* and *Rānā* regimes, no new traditional monastery could be established for the obvious cause of apathy from the ruling governments, and their hinduization policy. People had the liberty of choosing their way of religious life. Some sought alternative *Buddhist* tradition in place of

---

<sup>341</sup> Rajendra Lal Mitra, *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, (Calcutta: Sanskritik Pustak Bhandar, 1882), Preface, Pp. v-vi

their own, in the lack of proper environment created by their own negligence and ignorance. Alternatives are provided by *Lāmā Buddhist* tradition and newly introduced *Theravāda* tradition. Simplicity of *Theravāda* tradition, and liberal and discernable aspect Tibetan influenced *Lāmā Buddhist* tradition became attraction for Nepalese *Buddhists* who were earlier the followers of their own *Buddhist* tradition. Even though Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism managed to sustain its existence in the adverse situation of non support from national and international level. Because it is purely Nepalese, developed in Nepal in Nepalese mentality still maintaining universal *Buddhist* tenets, and confined to Nepalese soil, it lacked support from outside. So, it is totally through minor local support that it managed to thrive. No more new monastery could be added and the existing monasteries are also in dilapidated condition, *Buddhist* scholarship which once boomed also became limited. Even though, monasticism exists because it possesses several positive elements needed for its survival. All is not collapsed. The valley still have hundreds of old monasteries (*Bāhā* and *Bahis*), with full functional *Saṅghas*, with active ordination programs, perpetual followers and so forth, sufficient enough to sustain *Buddhist* monasticism. Till now the country is proudly exhibiting to the foreigners glimpses of its own indigenous cultural tradition including Nepalese *Buddhist* monastic features like *caryā* songs, *caryā* dance etc. based on *Svayambhū* emblem. But adequate attention is not given to better upkeep of the tradition and heritage.

### 7.5 Rays of Hope

As a consequence to revolt of people (*Jana Āndolan*) against the rulers, following Maoist insurgency, Nepal was declared secular country on 18 May 2006 ending its time-honoured official status as a *Hindu Kingdom*. Similarly, the country is declared a federal republic, thereby abolishing the monarchy. This should have positive impact in Nepalese *Buddhism*. Awareness about indigenous cultural heritage and religion is growing. Very recently, a commendable act of laying foundation for the establishment of traditional *Newār* monastery at Lumbini was completed through the leadership of *Nepal Paramparāgata Boudha Dharma Saṅgha* (Nepal Traditional *Buddhist* Association) engaged in the activities for the uplift of traditional *Buddhist* followers. The organization is accumulating the *dāna* offerings made by the *Buddhist* devotees during the festival of *Pañcadān*, who are zealously making donation for the pious cause. This is going to be the construction



of a new monastery after the hiatus of more than two centuries. Similarly, another local organization, *Lotus Research Centre* is conducting various programs to enhance awareness about the preservation of traditional *Newār Buddhism* since last twenty years.

*Newār Buddhist* tradition was a vibrant and dynamic religious tradition that concretely shaped and structured the lives of people and the culture and society they inhabit, and that in turn is transformed by the adaptation to this culture and society. The *Newār Buddhist* tradition with its dynamics of adaptation in *Buddhist* monasticism and its interaction with the laity, the adaptation to the caste system, the cult of stupas and images, festivals of *Buddhist* deities, life-cycle and other rituals, the tradition's narrative literature, etc is still continuing and serving as the identity of Nepalese people on the whole. It is because of *Newār Buddhists* that gave way to introduction of *Theravāda Buddhism* in Nepal and to spread of *Lāmā Buddhist* tradition. *Newār Buddhism* prepared the ground for the people to remain as *Buddhists* even in adverse condition. The exploration of *Newār Buddhism* will reveal other *Buddhist* and Indic religious traditions and their practice in society. Currently awareness about *Newār* monasticism is growing as a result of activities of above mentioned local organizations.

Therefore, the history of monasticism in Nepal where *Buddhism* is still an institutional and formal religion is the history of growth, progress and organization of a great culture that is interwoven to be its history of socio-culture complex. So, it is not the mere history of a faith though it has been approached too often from this viewpoint only. It is related most closely to the life of the people in the aspect that is seen in the organization of its *Saṅgha* and the functioning of its monasteries (*Vihāras*). It is the cultural aspect of the religion which is perhaps historically and sociologically more important.

## CHAPTER VIII

### Sectarian Influences on *Buddhist* Monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

*Buddhism* of *Nepal-maṇḍala* is *Mahāyāna-Vajrayāna* type characterized by several unique features which are now looked upon as contentious and incompatible in the context of modernization. Scholars have put less effort in finding out the roots of Nepalese *Buddhism*. Its origins are obscure inviting much scholarly debates. Did it grow out of Nepalese own creation without doctrinal bases? Did it develop from doctrinal positions of some pre-*Mahāyānic* schools? Did it evolve on the basis of certain new scriptures or is its evolution fuelled by some anti *Buddhist* sentiments/elements? Or was it rather the result of persistent influence from and interaction with *Hinduism* (which was and still is the major allegation leveled by *Theravādins/modernists*). To what extent can it be seen as an expansion of pre-*Mahāyāna* motifs? or does it rather mark an essential break with original *Buddhism*- a break of such magnitude that it can not be justified ? All these questions have been and still are the subjects of much discussion regarding Nepalese *Buddhism*. An attempt is made here to trace out the origins of Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism through the study of impact of *Mahāsāṃghikā* and *Sarvāstivāda* based on available sources.

#### 8.1 Impact of *Mahāsāṃghikā* on *Buddhism* of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

The first historical evidence indicating the existence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* in Nepal *Maṇḍala* is the inscription of *Cābahil* depicting *Kinnarījātaka*. The supposedly earliest inscription<sup>342</sup> of 4<sup>th</sup> century of Vrsdeva period found in *Cabahil* mentioned *Kinnarījātaka*, which was the story of Sudhana, from the *Mahāvastu* who falls in love with a *kinnarī* and saves her life.<sup>343</sup> *Mahāvastu* is an avowed text of *Lokottaravāda*, an offshoot of *Mahāsāṃghikā*.<sup>344</sup> Thus, the inscription implicitly

<sup>342</sup> Bajracharya , *Op.cit.*(f.n. 17), Pp. 1-8

<sup>343</sup> <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avadana>, Retrieved 2010.01.10

<sup>344</sup> Dutt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 116), P. 57

indicates the existence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* in Nepal. Presence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* is archaeologically confirmed from finding of Sāṅkhu inscription<sup>345</sup> of Narendradeva time (7<sup>th</sup> century) in Nepal. The inscription clearly mentions about the sect in Nepal. Therefore it can be concluded that *Mahāsāṃghikā* monasticism had existed in Nepal and their effect is still reflected in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism through their various practices mainly of *caitya* veneration and worship. The Chapahtol inscription of probably Amśuvarma time and the *Musum Bāhāl* inscription of Narendradeva mention the presence of a *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* which probably belonged to the *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect.<sup>346</sup> The Sāṅkhu inscription of Amśuvarma period (606-621 AD) also mentions about the *Mahāsāṃghikā Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha*.<sup>347</sup> Furthermore, an inscription excavated in Bhaktapur so far also mentions about the presence of *Mahāsāṃghikā Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* there.<sup>348</sup> It is considered to be very important because it proved existence in Nepal of ancient *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha*, which was organized according to the *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* lineage. *Mahāsāṃghikā* had separate *Bhikṣuṇī Prātimokṣa* texts along with *Bhikṣu Prātimokṣa*, both of which were collected by Fa-hien from Magadha during 5<sup>th</sup> century. Now these *Prātimokṣa* texts are available in Chinese in translated forms.<sup>349</sup> Therefore it can be said that *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* of *Lichchavī* period belonged to *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect. And the contemporary *Bhikṣu Saṅghas* of that time also belonged to *Mahāsāṃghikā*. Thus, the existence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* monasticism in Nepal during *Lichchavī* period can be assumed by the names of monasteries mentioned in the *Paśupati* and *Yāgabāhāl* inscriptions of Narendradeva. The inscriptions mention *Śivadeva Vihāra*, *Khurjurikā Vihāra*, and *Yangu Bāhā*. Śivadeva's inscriptions also mention the *Vihāras* such as *Mānadeva Vihāra*, *Khajurikā*, *Madhyama*, *Abhayaruchi* and *Kalyānagupta Vihāra*.<sup>350</sup>

Another noticeable point about *Buddhist Saṅgha* in *Lichchavī* inscriptions is the mention of the term '*Ārya Saṅgha*'.<sup>351</sup> The term *Caturdiśā Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha* meaning the monks from four quarters has also occurred in some of those

<sup>345</sup> Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 17), Pp. 496-98

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 382 and P. 508

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 382

<sup>348</sup> Pasuka, Vol. II, No. 11, N.S. 1118

<sup>349</sup> Dutt, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 60

<sup>350</sup> Hem Raj Shakya, *Baudha Murti Chhagu Adhyayana (Buddhist Sculptures- A Study)*, (Kathmandu: Khwaspusa, 1091 N.S), Pp. 3-4

<sup>351</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f. n. 17), P. 386.

inscriptions and this indicates to the primitiveness of the *Saṅgha*.<sup>352</sup> The word *Saṅgha* represents to the body of a monastery and the residing monks.<sup>353</sup> The *Ārya Saṅgha* meant a body of resident monks in a monastery.<sup>354</sup> One more remarkable point related to *Ārya Saṅgha* is that donations were given for the worship of *Lokeśvaras*.<sup>355</sup> Bandāhiti inscription explains that the *Avalokiteśvara* cult already became very popular in Nepal during the *Lichhavī* period, so, generous devotees donated land for the management of the *Pūjās* and to provide food to the *Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha*.<sup>356</sup> This indicates that *Ārya Saṅgha* could not be *Theravādin Bhikṣu Saṅgha* as it concerns with *Avalokiteśvara* cult. Different kinds of terms were used as prefix to the *Saṅgha* like *Śrāvaka Saṅgha*, *Ārya Saṅgha*, *Sammata Saṅgha*, *Jina Saṅgha* and so forth.<sup>357</sup> But, *Mahāsāṃghikā* used the term *Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha* for their monastic order.<sup>358</sup> They used *Ārya Saṅgha* interchangeably with *Mahā Saṅgha*. The use of ‘*Ārya*’ for ‘*Mahā*’ is not uncommon in *Sanskrit* and *Pāli*; hence ‘*ĀryaSaṅgha*’ may well be taken to mean *Mahā Saṅgha*.<sup>359</sup> This can be evinced from earlier Indian Inscriptions, especially of Nagarjunakonda, one of the places where *Mahāsāṃghikā* flourished. In the inscriptions, supposed to be of third or fourth century AD, *Mahāsāṃghikās* had used the term ‘*Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha*’ for their *Saṅgha*.<sup>360</sup> On this ground, it can be said that all those historical *Saṅghas* which were mentioned as *Ārya Saṅgha* in *Lichchavī* inscriptions were no other than *Mahāsāṃghikā*.

<sup>352</sup> Kanai Lal Hazra, *Constitution of the Buddhist Saṅgha*, (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1988), P. 80

<sup>353</sup> Dutt, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P.69

<sup>354</sup> Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidas, 1920), P.69

<sup>355</sup> (i) Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f. n. 17), P. 386

(ii) Badri Ratna Vajracarya, *Chudākarma vidhāna*, (Kathmandu: Vajracarya Samrakshan Guthi, 2030 B.S.), P. 14. *Ārya saṅgha* is repeatedly pronounced in the proceedings of *Pravajyā* ceremony.

<sup>356</sup> Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 17), P. 386

<sup>357</sup> *Śrāvaka saṅgha* aims to achieve arhathood. A group of at least four monks who experience *Nirvāna* through the practice of *vipassana* meditation comprises *Sammata saṅgha*. An order of those who conquer sense organs and practice *śīla*, *samādhi* and *prajñā* with *bodhicitta* is the *Jina Saṅgha*. Actually a person who comprehends four noble truth and practice eight fold noble path is *Ārya* and group of such persons striving for *Nirvāna* is called *Āryasaṅgha*.

<sup>358</sup> Nalinaksha Dutt, “Notes on the Nagarjunakonda Inscriptions” in *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, 7:3, 1931.09., Pp. 633-53

<sup>359</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid*,

### 8.1.1 Who were *Mahāsāṃghikās* ?

In concomitant to its name, *Mahāsāṃghikā* is a great group of early *Buddhist* school which arose after second Great *Buddhist* council held in Vaiśālī approximately a century posterior to *Mahāparinirvāṇa*. There was a great gathering of *Mahāsāṃghikā* in Magadha where they convened Great Council after having splitted from *Sthaviravāda*.<sup>361</sup> Actually, *Mahāsāṃghikā* at first were those who stuck to ancient *Vinaya* rules. After the separation of *Mahāsāṃghikā*, the *Sthaviravādins* made additions to their *Vinaya* rules to make themselves more prominent. This has been proved by verification of their contemporary *Vinaya* rules which from *Mahāsāṃghikā* were lesser in number.<sup>362</sup> The *Mahāsāṃghikās* are referred to those who studied the ‘Ancient *Vinaya*’ and this is corroborated by the conclusions of Bareau, Pachow, Hofinger, Frauwallner and Roth that the *Mahāsāṃghikā Vinaya* represents the most ancient of all *Vinaya* traditions.<sup>363</sup> In 1977 Prebish and Jan Nattier published their ‘*Mahāsāṃghikā Origins*’, claiming to deduce that the most reliable account of the root schism in *Buddhism* is found in the *Mahāsāṃghika Śāriputra paripṛcchā*. The *Śāriputra paripṛcchā sūtra* (*Abhidharma* work of *Mahāsāṃghikas*) claims that the *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* is the original, and that the *Sthavira Vinaya* was expanded one. Fa-hien’s statement and Tibetan account also held the same view. Prebish & Nattier invoke the support of a range of scholars for the view that the *Mahāsāṃghikā* is indeed the earliest, hence supporting the claim of the *Śāriputraparipṛcchā*.<sup>364</sup> They emphasize that each scholar has arrived at this conclusion using a different method.

The *Theravādin* sources like *Cullavagga* assert deviation on *Vinaya* as the cause of origin of *Mahāsāṃghikā* while another tradition represented by the treatises of Vasumitra (*Samayabhedoparacanacakra*), Vinitadeva and Bhavya regard doctrinal dispute to be the cause. One has therefore to agree with Charles Prebish that ‘sectarian movement in the second century following *Buddha*’s *Mahāparinirvāṇa* was a product of both doctrinal and disciplinary issues’.<sup>365</sup>

<sup>361</sup> Wilhelm Geiger, *The Mahavamsa*, (Colombo: The Ceylon Government Information Department, 1950), Pp. 21-24

<sup>362</sup> Rekha Daswani, *Buddhist Monasteries and Monastic Life in Ancient India, (From the Third Century BC to the Seventh Century AD)*, (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 2006), P. 46

<sup>363</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>364</sup> <http://sectsandsectarianism.googlepages.com/mahasanghika-theearliestvinaya%3F>, Retrieved 20102.18

<sup>365</sup> Prebish, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 74), P. 27

*Mahāsāṃghikās* developed their concept of the *Lokottara* (transcendent) *Buddha* and the *Bodhisattvas*. This concept, now the mark of *Mahāyāna*, could not have developed without antecedents. It is highly probable that by pointing out the imperfections of *Arhathood*<sup>366</sup>, the *Mahāsāṃghikā* differentiated the *Buddha* from the *Arhats* thereby raising *Buddha*'s status from an enlightened to a transcendental being. The congruence of literary and archaeological evidence up to the first century B.C lends support to the view that the element of devotion (*bhakti*) had become an integral part of Early *Buddhism* as a religion of the laity due to *Mahāsāṃghikā* for whom the *Buddha* was no mere mortal teacher but pure and exalted one.<sup>367</sup>

*Mahāsāṃghikā* school had been termed by some sources as *ācāryavāda* or *ācāryakūla* or *ācāryaparamparā*<sup>368</sup> which was used for in opposite to *annācāryavāda* meaning *Sthavirāvāda*.<sup>369</sup> Moreover, the *Mahāsāṃghikā* cannot be identified with *Vajjiputtakā Bhikṣus* of Vaiśālī as some used to do for they had not discarded *Daśavathuni* from their *Vinaya*.<sup>370</sup>

Since *Mahāsāṃghikās* were great in number having large assembly 'Saṅgha', disputes were likely to occur among themselves. Such disputes and intra schisms within *Mahāsāṃghikās* gave rise to evolution of many sub-sects which differ in minor details. The sub sects of *Mahāsāṃghikās* were *Ekvyavahārika*, *Lokottaravāda*, *Caityakas* (*Caityavādins*), *Bahusrutriya*, *Prajñāptivāda* etc. *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Ekvyavahārika* and *Caityavādins* had generally common doctrines with minor differences. The *Mahāsāṃghikā* branches may be subdivided into two groups (1) The earlier or first group comprised the original *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Ekvyavahārika* and *Caityavādins* or *Lokottarvādins*. Though they were more localized in the north with the centre at Pataliputra they were not concentrated in one place. They were scattered all over North west India, Bihar and Western India.

<sup>366</sup> Mahadeva 5 points as mentioned in P.V. Bapat, *2500 Years of Buddhism*, (Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, Publication Division, 6th reprint, 1997), Pp. 87-88

<sup>367</sup> B. G. Gokhale, *New Light on Early Buddhism*, (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1994), Pp. 77-78

<sup>368</sup> Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362) P. 33

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>370</sup> A.K. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasi Dass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Reprint 2004), Pp. 213-14

They were with liberal disciplinary views and *Mahāyānic* leaning.<sup>371</sup> (2) the later or second group or the *Mahāsāṃghikā* of the South became widely known as the *Saila* schools or *Andhakas* with their chief centre at Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda (Sriparvat and Dhanakataka). *Bahusrutiya*, *Prajñāptivādin* may be classed with them.<sup>372</sup> They showed *Theravādin* leaning. Historical sources mention that right from the time of the second *Buddhist* council (380 BC) till the arrival of Chinese traveller It-sing (671 AD), Magadha was the centre of *Mahāsāṃghikā* monks.<sup>373</sup>

From 350 BC to 100 BC three principal sects of *Buddhism* - *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda* ruled in India though the sects evolved were numbered eighteen.<sup>374</sup> *Mahāsāṃghikā* remained in and around Pāṭaliputra as their main centre but had establishments also in distant places such as Kapisā, Mathurā, Aparāntikā and Andhra. The *Ekvyavahārika* are hardly known in later times and perhaps were reabsorbed into the *Mahāsāṃghikās*. The *Gokulikā* (*Kaurukullaka* or *Kukkutikā*) seem to have remained in the east, probably at Varanasi.<sup>375</sup>

In the early history of *Buddhism*, Vaiśālī is described as a town crowded with non *Buddhist* thinkers, and as a centre of the followers of Niganthanāthputta. Hence, non orthodox *Buddhists* should find footing there.<sup>376</sup> The inference of existence of the followers of *Mahāsāṃghikā* in Vaiśālī around 300BC can be agreeable to some extent. Similarly, Magadha including Vaiśālī was resided by the *Mahāsāṃghikā* monks. Later, they migrated to other places.

During the period of Emperor Aśoka (272-232 BC), a huge number of monks were expelled from Magadha. Most of those who could not prove to be *Vibhajjavādins* and got expelled from monasteries at that time were *Mahāsāṃghikās*. It is stated that the monks who were compelled to leave the *Saṅgha* of *Therīya Nikāya* (*Theravādins*) became members of the non-*Theravāda* sects, particularly the *Mahāsāṃghikās*.<sup>377</sup> The *Mahāsāṃghikās* were by this time a powerful body with a

<sup>371</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 116), P. 50 & 68

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid*, P. 61

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 62-63

<sup>375</sup> Warder, *Op.cit.*(f. n. 370), P. 281

<sup>376</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 9

<sup>377</sup> Daswani, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 362), P.56

large following. Magadha was an ancient centre of the *Mahāsāṃghikās*.<sup>378</sup> After expulsion they migrated to Kaśmir-Gāndhara, Andrapradeśa, Mathurā etc. It is quite probable that they had also migrated to Nepal valley. In Kaśmir-Gāndhāra, they occupied a prominent place and later on came to be known as *Sarvāstivādins*.<sup>379</sup>

It has already been proved that migration of *Buddhist* monks started with the emergence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* and *Sthavira* sects after second *Buddhist* council. In the beginning around 300 BC, *Mahāsāṃghikā* monks went both to the north and the south. They were active till the reign of Huviska (100 AD), the successor of King Kaniṣka.<sup>380</sup> During the reign of Kaniṣka, *Sarvāstivāda* was the dominant faith in India. *Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda* remained important during the days of Aśoka and Kaniṣka.<sup>381</sup> Hence, it may be possible that existing environment might have compelled them to move towards safer places. During that time, presence of *Mahāyāna* in the valley of Kathmandu can be considered as a ground for such an assumption.<sup>382</sup>

Literary evidence is partially substantiated by the eye witness accounts of Chinese Pilgrims who visited India. Fa-hien (of 5<sup>th</sup> Century) collected the *Vinaya* of *Mahāsāṃghikā* at Pātaliputra providing the ground for conclusion that the chief centre of the school was Magadha (Pātaliputra).<sup>383</sup> Hiuen-Tsang took special note of the three major sects viz. the *Samittiya*, the *Mahāsāṃghikā* and the *Sarvāstivāda*.<sup>384</sup> He states that the majority of inferior brethren at Pātaliputra established the *Mahāsāṃghikā* school.<sup>385</sup> It-sing (671-695 AD) admitted that the four principal groups of his time were *Mahāsāṃghikā* (with 7 subdivisions), *Sthaviravāda* (with 3 subdivisions), *Sarvāstivāda* (with 4 subdivisions), and *Sammitiya* (with 4 subdivisions).<sup>386</sup> He also mentioned that *Mahāsāṃghikā* were

<sup>378</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 61; Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362), P. 69

<sup>379</sup> Anukul Chandra Banerjee, *Sarvāstivāda literature*, (Calcutta: The World Press Pvt. Ltd., 1979), P. 6

<sup>380</sup> Epigraphica India, Vol. XI, New Delhi, Archeological Survey of India, 1981, P. 211

<sup>381</sup> Banerjee, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 379), P. 5

<sup>382</sup> Regmi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 235), P. 70

<sup>383</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n 116), P. 61

<sup>384</sup> Daswani, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 362), Pp. 62-63

<sup>385</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 61; Watters II, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 272), Pp 267, 269

<sup>386</sup> Daswani, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 362), Pp. 62-63



mostly found in Magadha.<sup>387</sup> He says that some members of these orders practiced a *Hinayāna* form of *Buddhism*; others adhered to the *Mahāyāna*. There were evidently, for example, *Mahāyāna* practitioners who were monks of the *Theravāda* Order, or conversely, *Sarvāstivāda* who kept strictly to the *Hinayāna*. In contrast, nowadays it is generally said that the *Theravāda* entirely eschews the *Mahāyāna*, but in earlier times this was evidently not the case.<sup>388</sup>

There is the possibility of migration of *Mahāsāṃghikā* monks along with the *Lichchavīs* to Nepal during that time. One of the cause of their migration to Nepal may be the strength of *Brahmanism* favoured by Gupta rulers, which forced them to find out favourable environment to propagate the *Dhamma* in this part of the continent. Nepal may be one habitat among those safe places. Availability of coins of Kadipus I and II in Nepal convinces, to some extent, that some kind of linkage either of trade relations or transmigration of monks existed between the Kusāna empire and Nepal.

Of the *Mahāsāṃghikā* the four schools: *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Gokulikā* (*Kaurukullaka*), *Lokottaravāda* and *Prajñāptivāda* continued to flourish in the east under the *Pālās*.<sup>389</sup> Influence of *Buddhism* of *Pālā* period in Nepal is always considered tremendous for final shaping of *Newār Buddhism*. Here, it can be assumed that before receiving *vajrayānic tantric* cult, Nepal also obtained and assimilated *Mahāsāṃghikā* values and tenets from Bengal during *Pālā* period.

Regarding the geographic context in which *Mahāyāna* emerged, it can be safely asserted that it arose in areas where the *Mahāsāṃghikās* were strong.<sup>390</sup>

### 8.1.2 *Newār Buddhist practices related to Mahāsāṃghikā*

There are several *Buddhist* practices still exhibited by *Newār Buddhists* revealing their direct or indirect relation to *Mahāsāṃghikā*. Even the practitioners hardly knew the sources of those practices as *Mahāsāṃghikā* was lost in the oblivion of

<sup>387</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n 116), P.61

<sup>388</sup> Monastic *Buddhism* in the Medieval Period and the 84 *Mahāsiddhās*, [www.dharmafellowship.org/library/essay](http://www.dharmafellowship.org/library/essay), Retrieved 1010.2.10

<sup>389</sup> Warder, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 370), P. 282,

(ii) Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya (Ed.), *Tārānātha's history of Buddhism in India*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, Reprint 1997), P. 274

<sup>390</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), Pp. 256-58; Daswani 2004, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 362), P. 68

the history. But, its remnants can be traced. Some of the practices bearing relation to *Mahāsāṃghikā* are as follows.

#### 8.1.2.1 The *Caitya* cult

It was *Mahāsāṃghikās* who gave prominence to the worship of *caitya* and *caitya* culture.<sup>391</sup> Presence of numerous *caityas* in Nepal including the famous *Svayambhū caitya* and biggest Boudhanāth *caitya* shows dominance of *caityavādins* some time in the history of *Buddhism*. Though several *Mahāyāna* literature bear concern with *caitya* veneration and also there are several evidences that during Aśoka period, thousands of *caitya*/stupas were erected, the earliest source about *caitya* culture goes to *Mahāsāṃghikā*. The evidence of this comes from an ancient text, an *Avalokānā* (or *Avalokita*) *sūtra*, which does not exist separately, but is found incorporated with the *Mahāsāṃghikā Vinaya work, Mahāvastu*.<sup>392</sup> An excerpt of *Avalokānā* is also given in the seventeenth chapter (on Prayer and worship) of Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsumuccaya*<sup>393</sup> which is a popular text among *Newār Buddhists*. Evidently this ancient *sūtra* gives the popular view of stupa and stupa-worship. Furthermore, *Cailaka Śākyas* are initiated before the *caityas* instead in monasteries. Monks such ordained are called *cailaka Bhikṣus*. There is the culture of celebration of grand *caityapūjā* worshipping all consecrated *caityas* of the Kathmandu valley. Almost in every *Vihāra* either inside the shrine or at the entrance, two images are often seen standing holding staffs engraved with *caitya* impressions. Among several *Bodhisattvas* described in the *Buddhist* texts, *Srikhara Lokeśwara* and *Sri Khikhara Lokeśwara* are prominent. *Lokeśwara* is supposed to be the monastic deity. These *Lokeśwaras* hold staffs with *caitya* impressions. Erection of *caityas* in many rituals has been the tradition in Nepal. It shows that *Newār Buddhist* monasticism is very close to the philosophical aspect of *Caityavāda*, a branch of *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect.

<sup>391</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 57

<sup>392</sup> (i) E. Senart (ed.). *Mahāvastu*, Vol. II, Paris, 1882-1897, P. 362;

(ii) Bimala Churn Law, *A Study of Mahāvastu*, (Calcutta & Simla: Thacker, Spink & Co, 1930)

<sup>393</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10), P. 185; Śāntideva, (translated by Cecil Bendall and W.H.D Rouse), *Śikṣāsamuccaya- A Compendium of Buddhist Doctrines*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasi Dass Publishers, Reprint 1999), P. 270. Also see: B. Bhattacharya (ed.) *Nispannayogavali* (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1972)

Many *Śākyas* and *Vajracāryas* in the Kathmandu valley worship enshrined *caitya*, at *Vajrayogini*, Sāṅkhu as the lineage deity. The place stood as the centre of *Caityavādins*. This is very suggestive of a historical and ritual link going back to *Lichchavī* Period, if not *Kirāntī* period when one of the prominent monasteries, Gun *Vihāra* was at this very site. Sāṅkhu Inscription of 7<sup>th</sup> century bearing the word *Mahāsāṃghikā* was recovered the site. Besides, the site being an important *Buddhist* site became the target of attack by Śāṅkarācārya. Still a stone *caitya* in upside down position can be seen at the site. This is often related to destruction by him. The *Saṅgha* of *Kwā Bāhā* in Lalitpur worship *Svayambhū caitya* as the lineage deity. When they worship, no blood sacrifice is ever made.<sup>394</sup> Each and every *Newār* monastery has *caitya* as its integral part. Therefore, *caitya* culture of *Newār* monasticism can be related to *Mahāsāṃghikā*. Thus, it is assumed that the northern *Mahāsāṃghikā* monks along with southern *caityavādi* monks accelerated the flow of *Mahāyāna* in the Kathmandu valley from 1<sup>st</sup> century to 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

In fact, offering worship and erecting *caityas* during *tantric* observances, the tradition of venerating *caityas*, presence of numerous votive *caityas* in *Buddhist* shrines remind the doctrine specially attributed to the *Caityavādin* sect. One can obtain merit by creation, decoration and worship of *caityas*. Even a circumambulation of *caitya* is regarded meritorious. Similarly, offering of flowers, garland and scents to the *caityas* are likewise meritorious

Others prefer to relate the *caitya* culture to *Lokuttavādins*, who also belonged to *Mahāsāṃghikā*.<sup>395</sup> Therefore, it shows that *Mahāsāṃghikā* monasticism had made its presence in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Here, it is important to note that the *Mahāsāṃghikās* became the starting point of the development of the *Mahāyāna* by their more liberal attitude and by some of their special theories.<sup>396</sup> *Mahāyāna* flourished in the Kathmandu valley with the support of *Mahāsāṃghikā* monks. In this context, it should be noted that *Mahāyāna* evolved in Nepal as in south India due to role of *Caityavādi* offshoot of *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect.

<sup>394</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 241

<sup>395</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 10), P. 78

<sup>396</sup> Conze, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 42), P. 121

Special Theories of *Mahāsāṃghikā* are about transcendental qualities of the *Buddha* which later gave rise to *Trikāya* concepts and wider conception of the *Bodhisattvas*.

### 8.1.2.2 Taking refuge

Unless one takes refuge in triple gems, he is not considered a *Buddhist*. All is welcome to pursue *Buddhist* path. But, simply following the principles of *Buddhism* is not sufficient to be called the *Buddhist*. The practice of taking refuge in Triple gems is as old as the time of formation of the *Saṅgha* in *Buddhist* history. This practice is still in vogue today. The adherents often go in refuge to Triple gems making salutation first to the exalted one reciting thrice the *Pāli* verse like *Namotasso Bhagavato Arhato Sammā Sambuddhasso*, and then reciting thrice the verses of refuge- *Buddham śaraṇam gacchāmi, Dhammam śaraṇam gacchāmi, Saṅgham śaraṇam gacchāmi*.

But, the point of notice in *Nepal-maṇḍala* is that recitation is done in *Saṅskrit* which is not the direct translation of above *Pāli* verse to *Saṅskrit*. Recitation in *Saṅskritised* form is understandable but the difference is obviously unique. The difference is mentioning of the name of the aspirant who recites the verse. The verses go as follows- *Aham ittham nāmā, ----- (name of the aspirant)----Yāvat jīvam Buddham śaraṇam gacchāmi.....Aham ittham nāmā----- (name of aspirant)-- Dharmam śaranam gacchāmi, Aham ittham nāmā --- (name of aspirant) Saṅgham saraṇamā gachchami*. English translation of the verses is as follows- *I namely so and so take refuge in the Buddha till for my whole life, I namely so and so take refuge in the Dharma till for my whole life, and I namely so and so take refuge in the Buddha till for my whole life*. This practice of mentioning name of the aspirant came from *Mahāvastu*, the treatise of *Mahāsāṃghikā*<sup>397</sup>, and it further reveals their impact in the *Buddhist* monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Though the verses mentioning of the name of the aspirant, the same may not found while reciting, as it is taken understood or it has been recently influenced by *Pāli* version.

### 8.1.2.3 Monastic Initiation

At the time of *Pravajyā*, Monastic initiation, a novice monk requires to worship a *caitya*.<sup>398</sup> This practice does not exist in *Theravāda* tradition. Similarly, *Silāku* (the staff), which a novice holds, has an impression of *caitya* on the top.

<sup>397</sup> Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362)

<sup>398</sup> Bajracarya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 355ii), P. 14

There is a practice of handing over ornaments to a novice in the *Pravajyā* ceremony. The candidate is presented with two silver bracelets, a pair of earrings, a silver necklace along with robes, begging bowl, a staff and ritual umbrella. The practice of giving ornaments to a novice or a *Bhikṣu* is similar to that mentioned in the *Bodhisattvapitaka*. As mentioned in the text, ornaments are offered to the *Mahāsattva* who belongs to *Mahāsāṃghikā*.<sup>399</sup> The *Pravajyā* ritual observed by the *Newār Buddhists* still have remnants of the influence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* doctrine to some extent. There is a tradition that a *Newār* novice has to make request in front of the elders of the *Sanḡha* to initiate him as a *Parivrājaka* and utter *Buddhatvapada Prāptaye*<sup>400</sup> (In order to acquire the position of the *Buddha*). The aim of *Pravajyā* initiation is to go forth in the path of enlightenment, thereafter acquiring Buddhahood. It was also the core doctrinal approach of the *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect.<sup>401</sup>

During Monastic initiation, the *Vajrācārya* priests recite and make the novice initiates repeat the verses containing the very word ‘*Ārya Sanḡha*’ which has been already mentioned above as synonym for *Mahā Sanḡha* as used by *Mahāsāṃghikā*.<sup>402</sup>

#### 8.1.2.4 The Practice of *Dāna*

The practice of *dāna* is popular *Buddhist* occasion. The views of the *Newār Buddhists* regarding the practice of *dāna* have certain similarities with those of *caityavādins*. In fact, both the *Vajrācāryas/Śākyas* and ancient *Caityavādins* desired happiness in both the worlds for themselves and for the entire sentient beings. An inscription in Nāgarjunakonda elaborates the conceptual orientation of the *caityavādins*.<sup>403</sup> Similarly the word *Mahāsāṃghikā* is repeatedly uttered at the recitation time of *Dānagāthā* while offering donations to *Dīpaṅkara Buddha* and

<sup>399</sup> *Bodhisattva Pitaka*, National Archives, Kathmandu: Folio No. 106/327, P. 2

<sup>400</sup> Bajracarya, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 355ii), P. 1

<sup>401</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), Pp. 71-76

<sup>402</sup> Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 355ii)

<sup>403</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 358), Pp. 633-53

Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 116

*Vajracārya*/Śākya monks.<sup>404</sup> The *Dānagāthā* recited at those ceremonies seems to have been extracted from *Mahāvastu*. The greatest occasion of practice of *dāna* for *Newār Buddhist* is *Samyak Mahādāna* festival. Tradition of celebration of this festival is practice in Nepal from *Lichchavī* time, the earliest source is the reference of grand *Samyak* celebration with writing and explanation of *Ārya-Aṣṭasāhashrikā Prajñāpārāmitā* in the year N.S 135 (1014 AD) during the joint reign of the king Bhojdeva, Rudradeva and Laxmikamadeva.<sup>405</sup> On this occasion *dāna* is offered to the *Saṅgha*, which is mentioned sometimes in the history as *Mahāsāṃghikā Saṅgha* and many times the same is alternatively mentioned as *Ārya Saṅgha*, which is the substitute for *Mahā Saṅgha*.<sup>406</sup> During *Samyak* time, past *Buddhas* mainly *Dīpaṅkar* and other *Buddhist* deities like *Avlokiteśvara*, *Manjuśrī*, *Tārā* and so forth are displayed and worshipped. Fa-hien, the great Chinese *Buddhist Traveller* of 5<sup>th</sup> century, also witnessed such occasion during his travel to Magadha.<sup>407</sup>

#### 8.1.2.5 Fascination of number Five

Citing the version of Prof. Przyluski, Nalinaksha Dutta mentions that the *Mahāsāṃghikā* had a particular fancy for number ‘five’<sup>408</sup> and many names with *pañca* were noticed – for example *pañca-mātukā* of *Vinayapitaka* of *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Pañca-vijnāna* (view of *Mahāsāṃghikā* that five sense perceptions (*vijnāna*) exist in the material and non material spheres)<sup>409</sup> and so forth. *Mahāsāṃghika* had a complete canon of their own which are divided into five parts- the *sūtra*, the *Vinaya*, the *Abhidharma*, the *Dhāraṇī* and miscellaneous.<sup>410</sup> This fascination of Nepalese *Mahāsāṃghikās* must have culminated to adoption of popular unique concept of *Pañca-Buddha* later.

<sup>404</sup> Junu Basukala Ranjitkar, *Pañcadān Festival of Bhaktapur*, (Kathmandu: Nhuja Guthi Samaj, Boudha Adhyayan Samaj & Bhaktapur Vikash Sahayog Saṅgha, 2007) Pp. 66- 73, Verse nos. 6,7,8,14 and 17 refer the word *sanghika*

<sup>405</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 294), P. 36; Hemraj, *Samyak Mahādāna Guthi*, P. 16

<sup>406</sup> Hem Raj Shakya, *Samyak Mahādāna Guthi*, (Kathmandu: Jagatdhar Tuladhar, B.S. 2036), Pp. 88-89

<sup>407</sup> Gokhale, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 367), P. 184

<sup>408</sup> Dutta, *Op. Cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 60

<sup>409</sup> *Ibid*, P. 92

<sup>410</sup> H. Kern, *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1989), P.4; In place of Miscellaneous, *Samyukta pitaka* is mentioned in Govinda Chandra Pande’s *Boudha Dharma Ke Vikāsh kā Itihāsa (History of Development of Buddhism) Hindi*, (Lukhnow: Uttara Pradesh Hindi Sansthan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1990), P. 184

### 8.1.2.6 House Holder Monks

Prominence of House holder monks in *Newār Buddhism* could also have its root in *Mahāsāṃghikā*. Members of the *Saṅgha* have to be monks. But, as shown by Nāgarjunakonda inscriptions, in explanation of the line containing words ‘*gahapatiputassa Dusakasa*’ a householder was mentioned as belonging to the *Saṅgha*. Comment on it by Dutt is worth mentioning here – ‘*It is still more significant that a householder(gahapati) is pointed out as belonging to the sect(Mahāsāṃghikā), a thing rather unusual in Buddhism, but it should be remembered that the Mahāsāṃghikā, as the forerunners of the Mahāyānists, were the first Hinayānists to give a place to the laity in the Buddha Dharma.*’<sup>411</sup> Here, it is understandable that the householder must have taken as the member of the *Saṅgha* after his following of a temporary ordination or short time monkhood or some sort of special arrangement must have been done for him. Otherwise, why not all the householders were treated as belonging to the *Saṅgha*. Further research is required to confirm it. However, the said inscription provided a clue to the most pertinent issue of *Newār Buddhism*.

### 8.1.2.7 Involvement of Monks in Life cycle rites

It is often felt ridiculous and controversial when monks are found doing rituals for the lay-followers especially in life cycle rites. More than once recently it has again been suggested that *Buddhist* monks had little or no role in life-cycle ceremonies in early India.<sup>412</sup> It is not known on what evidence these suggestions are based. So, the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* are often criticized for conducting lifecycle rituals. But, it is learnt from the text *Abhisamayacārikā*- the *Prākit*-cum *Saṃskrit* text of *Mahāsāṃghikā* that there was active participation of monks in domestic lifecycle rituals. The text showed the monks were often invited to perform lifecycle rituals.<sup>413</sup> *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya vastu* of *Sarvāstivāda* also attests such performance by the monks.<sup>414</sup>

<sup>411</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 358), Pp. 647-648

<sup>412</sup> H. Bechert and R. Gombrich, eds., *The World of Buddhism: Buddhist monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1984), P.14;

<sup>413</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181), P. 78

<sup>414</sup> *Ibid*, P. 76

#### 8.1.2.8 Chariot Festival

It is already mentioned above that the centre of *Mahāsāṃghikā* was Magadha by the time of Fa-hien who collected its *Vinaya* treatises and took them to China. Fa-hien also described the custom prevalent there of annual procession of *Buddhist* images carried on a four wheeled, five storeyed high cart.<sup>415</sup> His description is very much similar to our Chariot pulling festivals of *Rato Matṣendranātha* and *Seto Matṣendranātha*. It also provides ground for speculation that there existed connection between *Mahāsāṃghikā* of Magadha of 5<sup>th</sup> century and *Buddhism* of the Kathmandu valley. Other descriptions<sup>416</sup> by Fa-hien like popularity of cult of the former *Buddhas*, the common ritual of *caitya* worship, popularity of image worship of various *Bodhisattvas* such as *Avlokiteśwara* and *Manjuśrī* also give cues for such speculation.

Here, it seems proper to present the view that *Buddhism* entered in the Kathmandu valley in earlier flexible form. *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect paved the way for *Mahāyāna* and nourished esoteric practices in *Vajrayāna Buddhism*.

#### 8.1.2.9 Priority to *Pañcaśīla*/*Daśa śīla* rather than *Vinaya*

The dissent of the *Mahāsāṃghikās* from the *Theravādin*'s strict and literal interpretation of the *Vinaya* may be traced from the very inception of that dissident school. The *Lokottaravādins* among them, were not particular about inserting the regula in their *Vinaya* work.<sup>417</sup> The *Kaukkutika* (*Kaulikās* or *Gokulikā*), the branch of *Mahāsāṃghikā* held the extreme view that the real teachings of the *Buddha* were not the *Vinaya*, but *Abhidharma* (philosophy), while both the *Vinaya* and the *sūtra* are expedients<sup>418</sup> and that 'a *Bhikṣu* may or may not have three robes for covering his body; may or may not reside in a monastery; and may or may not take his meal within the time limit'. This sect is mentioned by Vasumitra as a *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect.<sup>419</sup> Observances of disciplinary rules is not obligatory as these do not fit in always with the moral ideals of a *Bodhisattva*.<sup>420</sup> Relaxation of minor *Vinaya* rules

<sup>415</sup> Gokhale, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 367), P. 180

<sup>416</sup> *Ibid*, P. 184

<sup>417</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 10), P. 173

<sup>418</sup> Daswani, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 362), P. 67.

<sup>419</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 10), P. 174.

<sup>420</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P.69



was comfortably accepted by *Mahāsāṃghikās*. Huien Tsang's statement<sup>421</sup> that the majority of inferior brethren at Pāṭaliputra established the *Mahāsāṃghikā* school also indicates liberal attitude of *Mahāsāṃghikās* not being serious about the monastic code, *Vinaya*. It can not be mere co-incidence that *Newār Buddhists* have also not given importance to monastic *Vinaya*. Instead of following full-fledged numerous monastic rules *Newār Buddhists* are introduced and encouraged to follow *Pañcaśīla* (five *śikṣāpada*) and *Daśa śīla* (ten *śikṣāpada*) which are introduced to the novices during ordination time.

#### 8.1.2.10 Presence of *Mahāsāṃghika* literature

Finding of *Mahāsāṃghikā* literature like *Mahāvastu*, *Bodhisattva-pitaka* etc. in Nepal valley, also indicate existence of the sect in Nepal sometime in the history. Some of these texts are now found preserved at National Archive, Āsha Saphu Kuthi etc. Extant literary works of *Mahāsāṃghikā* are in *Prakrit-cum-Saṃskrit* language. Csoma Koros states that language of *Mahāsāṃghikā* was written in a corrupt dialect.<sup>422</sup> This means the language used by *Mahāsāṃghikās* was hybrid *Saṃskrit* being the mixture of *Prakrit* and *Saṃskrit* languages. And, here we can recall that the literary language of *Newār Buddhism* is also known as Hybrid *Saṃskrit*. Therefore, it is understandable that *Mahāsāṃghikā* might have provided Nepalese *Buddhists* impetus for use of Hybrid *Saṃskrit* which became so prominent in later phase.

#### 8.1.3 *Mahāsāṃghikā* served as bridge to *Vajrayāna*

The historical context and *Buddhist* practices of *Newār Buddhist* monasticism point towards their relations with ancient *Mahāsāṃghikā*. During the process of development of *Vajrayāna*, conceivable tenets, dogmas, rites and practices were included in this school. Benoytosh Bhattacharya writes that the leading tenets of *mantrayāna* along with *mantras*, *maṇḍala*, *Mudrās* and gods and goddesses were included in *Vajrayāna*. The earliest work of this class is said to be the

<sup>421</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 116), P. 61; Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India AD.629-645*, Vol. I & II in one bound, (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996) Pp. 267, 269

<sup>422</sup> Bapat, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 115ii), P. 98

*Vidhyādhara* which has been characterized by Hiuen-tsang as belonging to the canonical literature of the *Mahāsāṃghikā*.<sup>423</sup>

Most of the scholars believe that the *Mahāsāṃghikā* school was the nidus of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*.<sup>424</sup> The *Mahāsāṃghikās* became the starting point of the development of the *Mahāyāna* by their more liberal attitude and by some of their special theories.<sup>425</sup> *Mahāsāṃghikā* conception of the *Buddha* contributed to the growth of the later *Trikāya* theory and gave rise to the wider conception of the *Bodhisattva*.<sup>426</sup>

Thus it can be assumed that *Mahāsāṃghikās* were more or less responsible for introducing *tāntric* practices. Those practice were handed down through successive chains of preceptors and discipline. Again married status of ordained persons is questioned frequently. The *tāntric Vajrayāna* follow the path which incorporates *Prajñā* and *Upāya* which are symbolized by female and male forces respectively. So, the *tantric* process proceeds in the way of emancipation with having consort and full fledged householder state. Hence, they are married.

Dynamism of worldly affairs does not allow any institution whether religious or secular to remain static. It demands continuous adaptation and change. *Buddhist* monasticism witnessed such a transformation as time went by. Several sects and sub sects had evolved and vanished or changed in course of time. But, it seems *Mahāsāṃghikā*'s impact on Nepalese *Buddhism* was tremendous and is still continuing.

## 8.2 Influence of *Sarvāstivāda* in *Newār Monasticism*

*Sarvāstivāda*, also known as *Vaibhāṣika* or *Hetuvāda* or *Muruntaka* was the sect seceded from the *Theravāda*, allegedly the most orthodox school of *Buddhism*. The *Sarvāstivāda* was a very powerful *Buddhist* movement for a number of

<sup>423</sup> (i) Bhattacharya, *Op.cit.* (f. n 165), P. 14

(ii) --*An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1980), P. 24;

(iii) Locke, *Op. cit.* (f.n 108), P. 10

<sup>424</sup> Conze, *Op. cit.*, (f. n. 42), P. 121

<sup>425</sup> *Ibid*, P.121

<sup>426</sup> Bapat, *Op. cit.*, (f. n. 115ii), P. 99

centuries in the major parts of Asia including India, China, Nepal and Tibet. It withstood the brunt of confrontation with *Vibhajjāvādins* and pushed it in the garb of *Therāvāda* on one hand and exerted immense pressure for a long time against *Mahāyāna* which was in the offing. Mathurā was the early important centre of *Sarvāstivāda*.<sup>427</sup> Kaśmir-Gāndhara had also remained its centre. The term *Sarvāstivāda*, *Pāli Sabbatthivāda*, *Sarva* (all) + *asti* exist) + *vāda* (doctrine) means all exist. In other words it is a doctrine which advocates that all things external and internal are real. They were also called *Vaibhāṣikas* on account of their dependence on *Vibhāṣā* (commentary on the *Abhidharma*) composed during the *Buddhist* council under the aegis of Kaniṣka (78-101 AD). *Sarvāstivāda*, the realist in contrary to *Theravādins* do not accept the supremacy of *arhat*. However, they also conceive the *Buddha* as human being and historical person. Mostly *Sarvāstivāda* was known to have been splitted into four different sub schools- (1) *Mūla-Sarvāstivādins* (2) *Dharmagupta* (3) *Mahisāsakas* and (4) *Kasyapiyas*. However, *Mahāvīyūtpatti*<sup>428</sup> gives only two names- *Mūla-sarvāstivāda* and *Ārya-sarvāstivāda*. A study of *Sarvāstivāda* would reveal many latent facts about *Buddhist* practices in Nepal and other places. Buddhābhadrā (359-429), the well known Nepalese Buddhist scholar of 5<sup>th</sup> century, who went to China to help in dispensation of Buddha's teachings was a *Sarvāstivādin*.

*Newār* monasticism also seems to have been influenced by *Sarvāstivāda*. The *Vinaya* followed in Nepal when there was celibate monasticism was *Mūla sarvāstivāda Vinaya vastu*. It is still being followed by Tibetan *Buddhists*, recipients of *Buddhism* through Nepal from India. As Gregory Scophen<sup>429</sup> rightly mentions, *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* reveals that monastic communities made negotiating approaches at several different stages in the history while living in *brāhmanical* areas or living in states ruled by *brāhmanized* kings; all of the evidences would suggest that, with few exceptions, this was precisely the kind of state that most *Buddhist* monastic communities in India had to deal with. And the case in Nepal was not the exceptional one. Considerations of this sort must for

<sup>427</sup> K.D. Bajpai, "Sarvāstivāda in Historical Perspective" in Sanghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition* (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994), P. 31

<sup>428</sup> The great Thesaurus of Tibet, prepared through compilation of massive translated works during the reign of Tibetan king Rālpāchen in the middle of ninth century.

<sup>429</sup> For details, please see: Gregory Scophen, *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters, Still More Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), P. 187

now, of course, remain conjecture and hypothesis. Regardless of its early history, which remains controversial, there are good indications that the *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* was an important influence in Indian *Buddhism* from the Gupta period on: there is seemingly strong evidence for its presence and influence at Ajanta in the fifth and seventh centuries; in the seventh century it was known and used in such widely separated places as Tamralipti in Bengāl, Nālandā in Bihār, and Gilgit in Pakistan. Still late at least Gunaprabha's *Vinayasūtra*-compendium or summary of *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* was known at Vikramśīla; and the fact that it was taken as the sole canonical text of *Vinaya* by the Tibetans suggests that it had great authority everywhere in eastern India and Nepal in the communities from which the Tibetans got their *Buddhism*. It is therefore, of considerable significance for understanding the nature of *Buddhist* monasticism.<sup>430</sup>

Since Nepalese *Buddhism* is still based on *Saṅskrit Buddhist* literature and *Sarvāstivāda* is credited to have developed and followed it<sup>431</sup>, the assumption becomes tenable. History has it that many Tibetan monks/scholars were trained in Nepal by Nepalese practitioners and also several Nepalese scholars had gone to Tibet and China to propagate the *Dharma*.<sup>432</sup> This gives clue that *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya* was followed in Nepal. Furthermore, finding of coins of Kuśāna period of Kaniṣka time also hints to this assumption.

It has been already mentioned above that during the period of Aśoka (272-232 BC), a number of monks were expelled from Magadha. Most of those who could not prove to be *Vibhajjāvādins* and got expelled from monasteries at that time were later converted to *Sarvāstivādins*. After expulsion they migrated to Kaśmir-Gāndhara, Andrapradeśa, Mathurā etc. It is quite probable that some of them had also migrated to Nepal valley. In Kaśmir-Gāndhāra, they occupied a prominent place.<sup>433</sup> Hence, it may be possible that existing environment might have compelled them to move towards safer places. Xion xang had counted at least 158 *Sarvāstivādin* monasteries in India and Central Asia housing 23,700 monks.<sup>434</sup>

<sup>430</sup> *Ibid*, P. 187

<sup>431</sup> Bapat, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 115ii), P. 44

<sup>432</sup> George N. Roerich, *The Blue Annals*, (New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1996); Taranatha Reprint 1997, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 389ii) *History of Buddhism in Tibet*

<sup>433</sup> Banerjee, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 379), P. 6

<sup>434</sup> Elizabeth Cook Ed.) and Yeshe De Research Project: '*Light of Liberation*', *A History of Buddhism in India*, Crystal mirror Series Vol.VIII, (Berkeley, Dharma Publishing, 1992), P. 239

During that time, presence of *Mahāyāna* in the valley of Kathmandu can be considered as a ground for such an assumption.<sup>435</sup> The *Saṅskṛit* tradition or *Sarvāstivāda* speaks of king Aśoka's support to the *Sarvāstivādins* towards the later part of his life.<sup>436</sup> It also claims that the spiritual teacher of Aśoka was Upagupta and not Moggaliputta Tissa who almost all of the *Pāli* tradition mentions to be the teacher of Aśoka.<sup>437</sup> *Saṅskṛit* source popular in Nepal like *Svayambhūpurāṇa* also mention Aśoka's visit with his teacher Upagupta to *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

*Theravāda* and *Sarvāstivāda* played massive role during the days of Aśoka and Kaniṣka respectively.<sup>438</sup> While the former was more active during Aśoka's period, the later was more active from the reign of King Kaniṣka<sup>439</sup> when *Sarvāstivāda* was the dominant faith in India. Kaniṣka was its great patron of *Sarvāstivāda*. He was also credited to have convened *Sarvāstivādin* Council<sup>440</sup> in Kaśmir or Puruṣpur. The council is also regarded as the fourth *Buddhist* council by the adherents of *Mahāyānists*.

### 8.2.1 Monastic ordination (*Pravajyā*)

Making monks locally known as *bare chuyegu* i.e. *Pravajyā* is carried out in *Newār Buddhist* tradition according to ritual manual *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*. The starting point of the rite is more precisely the *pravrajyā* rite as attested in several *Sarvāstivādin* texts like the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya vastu* and in two independent *Vinaya* works of the *Mūlasarvāstivādins*, namely the *Upasampadājñāpti* and the *Ekaśatakarman*, as part of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*.<sup>441</sup>

<sup>435</sup> Regmi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 235), P. 70

<sup>436</sup> A.C. Banerjee "The Sarvāstivāda school of Buddhist Thought" in Sanghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition*, (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994), P. 4

<sup>437</sup> Amarnath Thakur "Origin and Evolution of Sarvāstivāda Buddhist Sect in India" in Sanghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition*, (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994), P. 177

<sup>438</sup> Banerjee, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 379), P. 5

<sup>439</sup> Epigraphica India, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 380), P. 211

<sup>440</sup> Thakur, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 437), P. 178

<sup>441</sup> Alexander Von Rospatt, 'The Transformation of the Monastic Ordination (*pravrajyā*) into a Rite of Passage in *Newār Buddhism*', P. 203

[http://sseas.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/faculty/files/avrospatt\\_the\\_transformation\\_of\\_the\\_monastic\\_ordination\\_into\\_a\\_rite\\_of\\_passage\\_in\\_newar\\_buddhism.pdf](http://sseas.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/faculty/files/avrospatt_the_transformation_of_the_monastic_ordination_into_a_rite_of_passage_in_newar_buddhism.pdf)

### 8.2.2 *Sarvāstivādin* Literature in Nepal

Renowned *Buddhist* master Vasubandhu is said to have stayed in Nepal at the later phase of his life and he died in Nepal.<sup>442</sup> Initially, he was *Sarvāstivādin* and wrote his *magnum opus* text *Abhidharmakośa*. Vasubandhu afterwards travelled to Ayodhyā and was converted to the faith of *Mahāyāna* by his half brother Asaṅga. Vasubandhu had contributed to compilation of most of the contents of *Nava grantha* texts in Nepal. The popular text *Lalitvistara* of Nepal, one among nine texts of *Nava grantha* containing the biography of the *Buddha* is considered to be *Sarvāstivādin* literature.<sup>443</sup> Scholars like Rhys David described *Lalitavistara* to have been composed in Nepal by unknown poet author between six hundred to one thousand years after the birth of the *Buddha*.<sup>444</sup> Another popular *Buddhist* text recovered from Nepal only is *Avadānaśataka* (Hundred Legends). The text is also regarded as *Sarvāstivādin*.<sup>445</sup> Gregory Scophen also asserts *Avadānaśataka* as *Mūla sarvāstivādin* text.<sup>446</sup> The fourth *varga* of the *Avadānaśataka* appears to be particularly dependent on the *Mūlsarvāstivāda Vinaya* as many as half of the tales in the former may have come from the latter (No. 31, 36, 37, 38, and 40).<sup>447</sup> Likewise, *Divyāvadāna*<sup>448</sup>, *Avadānakalpalatā* are also among popular *Buddhistavadāna* texts in Nepal. *Sarvāstivādins* were accredited to have promoted *Buddhism* through maximum use of *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* stories<sup>449</sup> which are still prevalent in Nepal. In fact, *Vinaya* is embedded in *Avadāna* and *Jātakas*. *Sarvāstivādin Vinaya* is replete with *Avadāna*. It is believed that the *Avadāna*-class of literature originally belonged to the *Vinaya* itself.<sup>450</sup> Lessons of *Vinaya* were

<sup>442</sup> (i) James Hastings, James A. Selbei, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Part 24, (Edinburg: T & T Clark, 1932), Pp. 420-500

(ii) Kern, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 410i), P. 129

<sup>443</sup> J.N. Bhattacharya, Nilanjana Sarkar (Ed.). *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Sanskrit Literature Vol. I*, A-Dh, (Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2004). P. 772

<sup>444</sup> Thomas, E. J., "The Lalitavistara and Sarvāstivāda" in *Indian Historical Quarterly* 16:2 1940.06, Pp. 239-245

For full text see: ([http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-ENG/tho\\_1.htm](http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-ENG/tho_1.htm)), Retrieved 2010.2.12

<sup>445</sup> ([http://edwardbetts.com/find\\_link/Sarvāstivāda](http://edwardbetts.com/find_link/Sarvāstivāda)), Retrieved 2009.5.15

<sup>446</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 105

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid*, 162

<sup>448</sup> A.N. Lahiri, "The Sarvāstivāda: Its Inherent Vitality and Widespread Popularity" in Prof. Sanghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition*, (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994), P. 41

<sup>449</sup> Narayan, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 189), P. 67

<sup>450</sup> Sarkar, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 190), P.120

given to the practitioners through telling *avadāna* and *jātaka* stories which are very popular in Nepal. *Buddhist* stories including *Avadāna* and *Jātakas* about heroic actions of *Bodhisattvas*, *Buddha* or another spiritually advanced beings are the part of skillful means to demonstrate doctrinal points of the *Buddha*, matching teaching to audience. Some of these stories were domesticated and have become part of Nepalese socio-cultural events.<sup>451</sup> Public story telling is a common practice in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, which attract laity to the *Dharma*. In *Newār Buddhism*, narratives are told and retold in public storytelling giving sense that it is much less individualistic, antiwoman, and antifamily than expected and giving quite homely atmosphere. The domestication of narrative tradition in Nepal points to the ritual process evident in the later history of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. Popularity of some of the *Sarvāstivādin* texts including *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* also indicate their influence in Nepal. Actually, the significant use of *Avadāna* in Nepal can be ascribed to *Sarvāstivādin* source.

### 8.2.3 Use of hybrid language

Though the canon of the *Sarvāstivādins* was written in *Saṅskrit*, the texts such as the *Prātimokṣasūtra*, the *Lalitavistara* and other fragments of *Āgams* show that the language of the *Sarvāstivāda* canon did not conform to the rules of the classical *Saṅskrit* grammar and hence Senart chose to call this language as Mixed *Saṅskrit*.<sup>452</sup> It is noteworthy that the language of Nepalese *Buddhism* is also mixed *Saṅskrit* or hybrid *Saṅskrit*. It indicates connection among the language used by *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Sarvāstivāda* and Nepalese *Buddhism*.

### 8.2.4 *Sarvāstivādin* sects in Nepal

Brian H. Hodgson, the revealer of Nepalese wealth of *Buddhist Saṅskrit* literature to the western world, mentioned that there was a popular sect called *Svabhāvika*<sup>453</sup>, whose doctrine is realistic stressing upon a direct perception of external objects. Their view is very much similar to that of *Sarvāstivāda*. *Sarvāstivādin Buddhist*

<sup>451</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 2-6. The book is the outcome of his research based on his field visit and stay of 6 years in *Newār* settlements in Kathmandu valley, assisted by many Nepalese (significantly Labh Ratna and Subarna Man Tuladhar) and foreign informers/scholars.

<sup>452</sup> Thakur, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 438), P. 177

<sup>453</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), Pp. 55-59

Scholar Asvaghosha's *Buddhacarita* also mentioned about *Svabhāvika*.<sup>454</sup> Therefore, *Svabhāvika* mentioned by Hodgson based on his Nepalese informer Amritananda must be the *Sarvāstivāda*.

*Sautrāntika* always followed *Sarvāstivāda* as there were very few but vital differences between the two. Though it is also realistic, it asserts an indirect perception in addition to direct one, as advocated by *Sarvāstivāda*. The *Sautrāntika*, in their turn deny all authority to the *Abhidharma* and stick to the *sūtras*. Their *Buddha* is that of scripture, possessed of ten powers (*Daśabala*), the four *Vaisāradyas*, the three *Smṛtyupasthānas* and of all pervading compassion. They ascribe to him a *Dharmakāya* and *Sambhogkāya*.<sup>455</sup> There is a popular *stotra* (hymn) on *Daśabala* frequently recited by the *Newār Buddhists*.<sup>456</sup> In *Nepal-maṇḍala*, *Dharmakāya* is represented in the form of *Dharma-dhātu*, in concept of *Ādi-Buddha*. *Svayambhū* is regarded as emblem of *Ādi-Buddha*. Therefore, *Aisworikā*<sup>457</sup> group mentioned by Hodgson might be the *Sautrāntikas*, which is offshoot of *Sarvāstivāda*.

### 8.2.5 More about Householder monks

The monastic ideal found in the *Mūla-Sarvāstivāda-Vinaya*, is almost certainly one of the most prominent monastic ideals that the authors of the *Mahāyāna sūtras* encountered, and much of what these *Mahāyāna* authors said is probably fully intelligible only as a reaction against the ideal. If we are ever to understand more about the *Mahāyāna*, we obviously are going to have to know, then much more about what they were reacting to.<sup>458</sup> But, this needs further research for affirmation.

Monks in *Nepal-maṇḍala* are house holder. A separate version regarding the evolution of householder monks is presented by Gregory Scophen from the source, *Cīvarvastu* of "*Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*".

<sup>454</sup> (<http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/reigle01.html>), Retrieved 2009.5.10

<sup>455</sup> Kern, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 410i), P.126

<sup>456</sup> *Dasabala stotra* is a popular *Buddhist* hymn as *Stutamapi*. It can be found in any *stotra* hand book. There is a tradition of publishing books on Buddhist themes in the name of deceased person by the family members. And, *stortta* hand book is the one which often published due to its wide use. An example is: *BoudhaTutah Saphu*, (Kathmandu: Mahesh Manandhar family, 2066 B.S.)

<sup>457</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), Pp. 55-59

<sup>458</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 15



A wealthy old layman who is about to become ill approached a monk and asks for admission into the order. The monk shaves the man's head and begins to give him the rules of training (*śikṣāpada*), but the rich man becomes ill, which creates an obstacle to his admission into the order (*Pravajyāntarāyakarena ca Mahāta jvarenabhibhutāh*) against rule of admission of sick but his head had been shaved. The result, of course, was a thoroughly ambiguous situation, from the point of view of monastic law, which involved the status of the shaven-headed householder- visibly a monk- who had not fully admitted into the order. According to the text, the *Buddha* rules that the monastic care must be provided for the sick man (*upasthanam ... karaniyam*), he instructs in other words that in this regard at least, such an individual must be treated as a member of the community. The *Buddha*'s ruling in effect created a new category: a layman who has undergone the most visible act of admission to the order but who cannot, because of his illness, be fully admitted. The text goes on to indicate that the monks are obligated to attend to such individuals even if they are taken back to their own homes. This seems to clearly indicate that the redactor was fully conscious of the fact that he was inventing a new category of monks. The obligation of the monks to "Shaven headed householders" were then made matters of explicit monastic rule, but what about obligations of the shaven-headed householders to the monks. This opened the door that wealthy laymen without heirs could undergo the initial and most visible aspects of the ritual of admission into *Mūla-Sarvāstivādin* order. As a result, the monks would be obliged to care for them, especially in their final days, even if they remained at home. They in turn were expected, though not contractually obligated to leave their entire estate to the community and the state formally acknowledged the legitimacy of such an arrangement...<sup>459</sup>

Monks shave their heads but householders do not, such individuals (shaven headed householders) obviously represented a mixed or intermediate category.<sup>460</sup> In Nepal *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* usually keep their head shaven.<sup>461</sup> This was the tradition till some decades before. Still now they have to shave their heads while participating in religious events. Keeping shaven head by the monastics in Nepal during religious functions, may not be mere coincidence commensurate with *Sarvāstivādins*.

---

<sup>459</sup> *Ibid*, P. 11

Please see appendix for *Sanskrit* excerpt from *Mūla-Sarvāstivāda Vinayavastu*.

<sup>460</sup> *Ibid*, P. 103

<sup>461</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 58

*Vinayasūtra*- compendium of *Mūla-sarvāstivāda* of 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century, composed by Gunaprabha also has similar story of shaven headed householder.<sup>462</sup>

After failing to have a child i.e. an heir- through invoking various gods, the householder decides to enter the *Buddhist* order. He approaches a monk, who shaves the head of the householder and begins to give him the precepts, but, then- although he has undergone at least a part of the ordination ritual and certainly one of it most visible parts- he falls ill. The text notes that it was a serious illness that created an obstacle to his “going forth” (*pravrajyāntarayakarena ca Mahāta jvarenābhībhūtaḥ*). The *Buddha* accordingly rules that the precepts cannot be given to him until he recovers but that an attendant who is a monk should be given to him. Monks attend to him even when he is taken home, and even though he was now at home, the text explicitly says that he was designated as a “shaven-headed householder” (*tasya mundo gṛhapatir iti samjñā samvṛitta*). This designation is oddly like the terms *monachi laici*, “lay monk,”. Since medieval monks were clean-shaven, a bearded monk, like a “shaven-headed householder” was- if not a contradiction in terms- clearly a mixed and conceptually messy category, and the emerging problem should be obvious...<sup>463</sup>

*Vinayasūtra* says “who, for the purposes of entering the order (*pravrajyārtham*), has taken on the external appearance (of a renunciant), his head being shaved, etc., although not yet entered, he is to be seen (i.e. treated) as one who has entered (*pravrajitavād*)’”. In other words, the shaven-headed householder – one who has undergone at least a part of the ritual of ordination, who has at least assumed the outward appearance of a renunciant- is to be treated as, and has the rights of a renunciant.<sup>464</sup>

The monks that the redactors of the *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* envisioned or monks in Nepalese monasticism and the monks that modern scholarship has imagined, are radically different and this difference is extremely important for the historians of *Buddhism* for proper interpretation avoiding possible distortion.

For Kuśana to 5<sup>th</sup> -6<sup>th</sup> centuries, then *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* which according to Levi, is an immense pot pourri of *Buddhist* disciplines becomes a primary source.

---

<sup>462</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 184

<sup>463</sup> *Ibid*, P. 183;

<sup>464</sup> *Ibid*, P. 184

There is an almost general agreement that the *Vinaya* formation is late and was redacted and used during this period.<sup>465</sup>

The great Belgian scholar Etienne Lamotte declares that *Vinaya* or code like *Mūla-sarvāstivāda Vinaya* was late formulation, and that “one can not attribute to such work a date earlier than the 4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> centuries of Christian Era.”<sup>466</sup> He asserts *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* as a source of information for the first or second century of our era. He also noticed parallel development of various *Vinayas* texts like those of *Pāli*, *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Mūla-sarvāstivāda*, and *Dharmaguptika*. So, remarkable similarities can be discerned in the outlines of these *Vinayas*. The *Buddhist* communities did not live in complete isolation but were interested in the work carried out by their neighbours. It is therefore not surprising that they worked with the same methods and followed practically the same methods and followed practically the same plan. If nothing is more like one *Buddhist Vihāra* than another *Buddhist Vihāra*, it is normal that the various known *Vihāras* should reveal the close link which connected them.<sup>467</sup> Lamotte’s version would seem to suggest that the various *Vinayas* are alike because they all reflect the existence of a uniform, standardized, and well organized *Vihāra*.

#### 8.2.6 Property holding by the monks

A great deal of the *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* mentions regulations to govern the monks who had and were expected-even required- to have personal property and private wealth. If *Buddhist* monks were ever required to renounce private property, there are good reasons for doubting this- they certainly were not by the time the *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* was redacted. Some *Mūla-sarvāstivādin* monks who were “well known and of great merit”, were even expected to be quite wealthy. Though such wealth should be renounced or avoided, this *Vinaya* redacted had detailed rule to transmit that wealth to other monks or to shelter it from the state.<sup>468</sup> The texts also reveal that some monks had the status of donating to the monasteries and even constructed monasteries. Gregory Scophen in his text ‘*Monks and Business Matters*’ in “Chapter VI, Monastic Law Meets the Real world” deals in a

---

<sup>465</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 2-3

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid*, P. 20

<sup>467</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74

<sup>468</sup> *Ibid*, P. 5.

monk's continuing right to inherit Family property in classical India.<sup>469</sup> It is also mentioned in *Mūlasarvāstivāda* that the property of *pravrajita* (monks) was exempted from estate's ruling lay law.<sup>470</sup> One of these rights, conceded already by the king in the case of Upananda, is that his estate is not subject to lay law.

Available texts suggest and assume that *Buddhist* monks were active donors to their own monastic community.<sup>471</sup> And, perhaps, the extensive donative activity of individual *Buddhist* monks in these areas and periods, that this *Vinaya* reveal, establish that monks kept private property. The *Vinaya* unequivocally and explicitly acknowledged and supported the continuing right of *Buddhist* monks to inherit family property and to have absolute possession of such property to be used 'in whatever way one wishes'. *Buddhist* monks under such a rule, had every right to be rich.

It shows the monks held personal property. Therefore, there is no wonder in case of Nepalese monks that they too hold property. Holding personal property made them easy in leading the life of the house holder monk. It is learnt from ancient inscriptions and medieval colophons that Nepalese monks have enjoyed the status that they could donate materials or constructions or sponsor expense made to *Vihāra* or religious works like image installation (see below in image worship cult heading). This also shows their connection to *Sarvāstivāda*. Still, during the *pravajyā* time, question is put to the novice whether he has debt or he is able to manage paying back his debt. The incumbent should be free from the debt or should be able to deal with the debt. Then only he is conferred *pravajyā*. How can a novice deal with the debt unless he has personal property or is in position to have property. This also shows monks could hold personal property.

### 8.2.7 *Navakarmikā* monks and *Śākya/Vajrācārya*

It is well known that a number of professions are explicitly prohibited to the monks in the monastic code. Some professions were considered solemn work undertaken by the monks as mentioned in *Sarvāstivādin* texts. The word *Navakarmikā* appears a considerable number of times in the *Mūl-sarvāstivāda Vinaya*. *Navakarmikā* is

---

<sup>469</sup> *ibid*, P 315

<sup>470</sup> *Ibid*, P. 184

<sup>471</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181), P. 72

described as category of the monks engaged in the profession of craftsmanship including construction works. *Mahāsāṃghikā* also attests this profession of the monks.<sup>472</sup> It is remarkable to note that the monks in Nepal are found mostly following the profession of craftsmanship including carpentry. *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* are involved in goldsmith or other form of craftsmanship like woodcraft, metal craft or sculpture making and so forth. Therefore, some sort of linkage can be envisaged between these *Navakarmikā* monks mentioned by *Sarvāstivādins* and *Śākyas/Vajrācāryas* of *Nepal-maṇḍala*, the aboriginal residents. *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* have found ways of combining everyday life and religion. In the past they used to chant *Buddhist* hymns while they worked. And, according to *Mūla-sarvāstivāda Vinaya* text, recitation is one of the principal job of the monks besides meditation.<sup>473</sup> The life of an artisan or shopkeeper is indeed such as to permit a considerable amount of religious activity while they work.<sup>474</sup> Thus, these profession allow them also stick to their religious practice while they work. Gellner was impressed at the amount of time, energy and money expended by *Newār Buddhists* on religion and rituals.<sup>475</sup>

#### 8.2.8 Monks' involvement in rituals

Monks regularly had a role in ceremonies and that their ritual presence and performance at such ceremonies was of some importance.<sup>476</sup> The *Mūla-sarvāstivāda-Vinaya*, like the *Vinaya* of the *Theravāda*, then, assumes and requires the presence of monks at certain lay, family life-cycle ceremonies. It does not list all of the occasions, however, referring explicitly only to marriage and serious, if not terminal, illness. Like the *Abhisamacārikā* of *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Mūla-sarvāstivāda* assumes, and makes rules to govern, the participation of monks in domestic lifecycle rituals, and assumes as well that monks and nuns act as donors. Though minor details may vary, it has in common a set of basic assumption and ideas with both the *Theravāda* and *Mūla-sarvāstivāda* monastic traditions and codes. All share the assumption and acceptance of a monk's obligation to be present at, and to have an active role in, a variety of domestic, life-cycle rituals

<sup>472</sup> Jonathan A. Silk, *Managing Monks, Administrators and Administrative Roles in Indian Buddhist monasticism*, (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2008), Pp. 79-82

<sup>473</sup> *Ibid*, P. 25

<sup>474</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 33

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>476</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181i), P.72

connected with birth, marriage, house construction, sickness, and death. All promulgate rules governing such obligations.<sup>477</sup>

It is conformed and makes explicit what all of our texts, whether *Theravāda*, *Mūla-Sarvāstivāda*, or *Mahāsāṃghikā*, seem to imply: the obligation of monks to attend and participate in lay life-cycle ceremonies is not owed to all, but only to individuals who are formally designated as lay-brothers (*Upāsakas*) or lay-sisters (*Upāsikas*).<sup>478</sup>

### 8.2.9 Image worship cult

Though image cult got prevalence in *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* pantheons, *Sarvāstivādins* were believed to be the first to introduce image cult in *Buddhism* and they were also ascribed to have made first anthropomorphic *Buddha* and *Bodhisattva* images either in Gāndhāra or Mathurā around first century AD. It paved way to Devotionalism (*Bhakti*) and withstand challenge posed by *Brāhmanism*.<sup>479</sup> It is proved by inscriptions from Mathurā and North-western India.<sup>480</sup> In this connection the contribution of *Sarvāstivādin* monk and *Tripitakācārya* *Bāla* is noteworthy. He had several colossal *Bodhisattva* images installed during the reign of Kanishka (78 – 101 AD).<sup>481</sup> These images have been discovered at Mathurā, Kausambhi, Sārnāth and Śrāvasti. During that time around first century, *Maitreya Bodhisattva* was popular as many images belonged to him. It is to be remembered that the *Buddha* is mentioned in *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya* to have instructed Anāthapindaka to construct image of *Bodhisattva*, if not that of the *Buddha*. Although images were introduced at different times at different sites, they were almost always introduced by the same group everywhere: either monks or nuns. It would appear that the image and its attendant cult were major preoccupations of nuns and monks; that they everywhere introduced the cult and

<sup>477</sup> The various *vinayas* obviously do not list all the same ritual occasions. The *Abhisamacārikā* list is the most inclusive, and the *Pāli vinaya* puts considerable emphasis on “house dedication” rituals. The *MūlaSarvāstivāda-vinaya* is noticeably the most restrictive in terms of the kind of domestic rituals at which monks are obliged to be present. The explanation for these differences is not yet determined. It may be related to the cultural and geographical milieu in which the various codes were redacted rather than to chronology.

<sup>478</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n 181i), P. 80

<sup>479</sup> Narayan, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 189), P. 67

<sup>480</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>481</sup> Bajpai, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 427), Pp. 32-33

everywhere disproportionately supported it.<sup>482</sup> At such state, it can be assumed that the numerous images of *Buddha* and *Bodhisattvas* which are still extant in Nepal have been installed by *Sarvāstivādins*. The practice has been continued by *Mahāyānists* and *Vajrāyānists* to such an extent that *Nepal-maṇḍala* turned into open museum of *Buddhist* images and monuments.

### 8.3 On path to *Mahāyāna*

Earlier monasticism was aimed at *Nirvāṇa* following the ideal of *arhatva* laying stress on the transitoriness and non substantiality of all worldly constituents. The *Buddha* himself was described as an *arhat*. The concept of *arhatship* was gradually broadened and elaborated by the teacher and his successors. He (*arhat*) was defined as one who had eradicated all defilements. An *arhat*, who was thus liberated, knew that he would not be reborn. He had accomplished what was to be done. He had laid down his burden. He had lived the holy life. He was alone, secluded, zealous, earnest, master of himself.<sup>483</sup> There was a definite set of practices to pursue *arhat* ideal. Such *arhats* also went forth as preachers, and thus taught the doctrine of the *Buddha* to the people. The master had urged his disciples to wander and preach the truth for the welfare and liberation of the multitude, as he loved his fellow-creatures and had pity on them. Such was the ideal of the *arhat*, as it was understood during the three centuries after Gautama *Buddha*'s *Mahāparinirvāṇa*.<sup>484</sup> But it seems that the *Buddhist* monks began to neglect its certain important aspects in the second century B.C., and emphasized a few duties to the exclusion of others. They became too self centred and contemplative, and did not evince the old zeal for missionary activity among the people. They seem to have cared only for their own liberation from sin and sorrow. They were indifferent to the duty of teaching and helping all human beings. As a consequence a change was taking place as a reaction to prevailing attitude of the monks. The *bodhisattva* doctrine was promulgated by some *Buddhist* leaders as a protest

<sup>482</sup> Scopen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181i), P. 253, While the monks rooting the cult in the fourth to fifth centuries at Ajantā, Sārnāth, and Mathurā were predominantly *Mahāyāna* monks, those involved in the same cult in Srāvastī, Kausambhī, Mathurā, etc., in the Kusān period almost certainly were not. The widespread assumption that connects the image cult with the *Mahāyāna* is simply not well founded.

<sup>483</sup> Har Dayal, *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Reprint 2004), P. 2

<sup>484</sup> *Ibid*, P. 2

against this lack of true spiritual fervor and altruism among the monks of that period. Most scholars like late Etienne Lamotte, Hirakawa and others held the view that origins of the *Mahāyāna* can be traced to the activities of the laity, a lay revolt against the arrogance and pretensions of the monks.<sup>485</sup> Hirakawa's main point appears to be that the *Mahāyāna* grew up among an identifiable order of *bodhisattvas*, composed of lay and renunciate members of equal status, centered on the stupas, relic mounds, and as relic shrine worship. He (Hirakawa) has argued that the *Mahāyāna* arose not within a traditional monastic environment, but in lay-centred communities of *bodhisattvas* who congregated at stupa.<sup>486</sup> The coldness and aloofness of the *arhats* led to a movement in favour of the old gospel of "saving all creatures". The *bodhisattva* ideal of *Mahāyāna* can be understood only against this background of a saintly and serene, but inactive and indolent monastic Order.<sup>487</sup> This tendency towards spiritual selfishness among the monks is exhibited in the later *Pāli* literature which exhibited an attitude of contempt for the common people and remoteness from their interests, and self centred view.<sup>488</sup> It seems almost blasphemous to conceive of a *Buddha* without the attribute of love and altruistic activity. The *bodhisattva* ideal was taught in order to counteract this tendency to cloistered, placid, inert monastic life. A *bodhisattva* is emphatically and primarily one who criticizes and condemns the spiritual egoism of such *arhats*. He declares at the outset that he is not an *arhat* with whom he should always be contrasted. He declared that mere cessation of *dukkha* or the conquest of the *āsravas* was not enough. A *bodhisattva* was defined as one who strove to gain Bodhi and scorned *Nirvāṇa*, as he wished to help and succor his fellow creatures in the world of sorrow, sin and impermanence.<sup>489</sup> The *bodhisattva* doctrine was promulgated as a protest against the theory of *arhatship* which could not corroborate *arhat* role after his death. In the beginning before the final differentiation of *Mahāyāna*, there arose a number of schools, often with their own *Vinaya*, or monastic codes. They do differ, and their differences indicate past

<sup>485</sup> Williams, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 112), P. 20

<sup>486</sup> Jan Nattier, *THE BODHISATTVA PATH, Based on Ugraparipṛcchā, a Mahāyāna Sūtra*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, 2003, First Indian Edition 2007), P. 89

<sup>487</sup> Dayal, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 483), P. 3

<sup>488</sup> *Dhammapada* denigrates common people and showed attitude of contempt; *Thera-gāthā*, *Therigāthā* only strike the note of personal salvation, they seldom speak of the duty of helping others; the author of *Milinda-panha* declares that an *arhat* should aim at the destruction of his own pain and sorrow.

<sup>489</sup> Dayal, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 483), P. 4



schism. Although there are a number of different *Vinayas* the differences, while important to the monks concerned, are nevertheless relatively insignificant. Moreover there is no *Mahāyāna Vinaya* as such.<sup>490</sup> *Mahāyāna Buddhist* monks and nuns adhered to *Vinaya* rules which were promulgated by *Buddhist* schools which were non *Mahāyānic* traditions like *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Sarvāstivāda*, *Dharmaguptika* and so forth. For example, *Tibetan Mahāyāna* adopted *Mūlsarvāstivāda Vinaya* of *Sarvāstivādin* while Chinese *Mahāyānik* monks adhered to the *Sarvāstivāda* and/or *Dharmaguptika Vinaya*. This non promulgation of their own *Vinaya* shows *Mahāyāna*'s flexibility towards *Vinaya*. The *Mahāyāna* produced texts modifying the spirit of *Vinaya*, emphasizing the importance of a compassionate intention even if that might involve breach of mainstream *Vinaya*. But *Mahāyānists* did not significantly attempt, indeed felt no need, to construct and impose a systematic *Mahāyāna Vinaya* rivaling those of the non-*Mahāyānic* schools. Indeed, *Mahāyāna* was not a rival school. It was later further development. That *Mahāyāna* was embedded in its origins and development in the non-*Mahāyāna* schools is supported by inscriptional evidence. Therefore, it was not incidentally a result of schism (*Saṅghabheda*). *Mahāyāna* and non *Mahāyāna* monks could live without discord in the same monastery so long as they held the same code. Account of Chinese *Buddhist* travellers like Hiuen tsang, Itsing had proved this. Hiuen Tsang mentioned about Nepal having both *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna* monks resided staying side by side. There is enough room to hold the view as evinced by available data that in Nepalese monasteries (mainly in *bahi*) were home to both adherents. It shows that members of any *Buddhist* school, or any *Buddhist* tradition with separate *Vinaya*, came to embrace *Mahāyāna*.<sup>491</sup> *Mahāyāna* is held by its adherents to be a higher religious aspirant, with aspiration to full and perfect Buddhahood for the benefit of all sentient beings. It seems that earlier *Mahāyāna* emerged not as a school or sect but a particular spiritual vocation, to be pursued within the existing *Buddhist* community. To be a “*Mahāyānist*” is to be a *bodhisattva* and this thus does not mean to adhere to some new kind of *Buddhism* but simply to practice *Buddhism* in its most rigorous and demanding form.<sup>492</sup>

Change and transformation are inevitable. Presence of both *Mahāsāṃghikā* and *Sarvāstivāda* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* prepared the favourable ground in course of time

<sup>490</sup> Williams, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 112), P. 5

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid*, P. 5

<sup>492</sup> Nattier, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 486), P. 195

for development of *Mahāyāna*. Their liberal attitude, *caitya* cult, image cult, *Sanskrit* based literature played decisive role towards adoption of *Mahāyāna* which further had to culminate in *Vajrayānic* form. A new kind of monk appeared at Mathura in the fourth to fifth centuries. Five of the six Gupta monks donors appeared to have belonged to the same group. They all refer to themselves as *Śākyabhikṣus*- a title unknown in previous periods.<sup>493</sup> Although the full details have yet to be worked out, it appears that the appearance or presence of monks calling themselves *Śākyabhikṣus* everywhere in 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> centuries occurred in conjunction with the marked decline or disappearance of the participation of nuns in recorded *Buddhist* religious activity. The fact that these *Śākyabhikṣus* were almost certainly *Mahāyāna* monks may seem curious, but it appears that the emergence of the *Mahāyāna* in the 4<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> centuries coincided with a marked decline in the role of women of all kinds in the practice of Indian *Buddhism*.<sup>494</sup> The term *Śākyabhikṣu* is an epithet found almost exclusively in dedicatory inscriptions of Gupta period. *Śākyabhikṣu* is first attested in the late fourth century, inscribed on a relic casket buried in the stupa at Devni Mori. Most of what we know about India's *Śākyabhikṣus* comes from their inscriptions, painted and incised. *Śākyabhikṣus* remained as *Mahāyāna* monks continuously until *Buddhism* perished in India. Masao Shizutani and Gregory Schopen hold that it was a title *Mahayānist* monks adopted for themselves.

*Śākyas* of Kathmandu valley prefer to call themselves *Śākyabhikṣus* claiming that they were the descendants from *Buddha*'s clan, who fled massacre of Virudhaka in Kapilvastu and they were once *Bhikṣus* who later became householder. But the study reveals a different account as mentioned above. They were *Mahāyāna Bhikṣus* and anybody who got ordination under *Mahāyāna* pantheon had become *Śākyabhikṣu*.<sup>495</sup> A good number of *Lichchavī* inscriptions and Medieval colophons mentioned about existence of *Śākyabhikṣus* in Nepal supporting the fact that Nepal was the preferable habitat of *Mahāyānists*. Very recently a stone inscription dated 514 A.D is recovered from *Svayambhū* area confirming presence of *Svayambhū*

---

<sup>493</sup> On the *Śākyabhikṣus* and the emergence of the *Mahāyāna* in the fourth to fifth centuries. See M. Shizutani, "On the *Śākyabhikṣu* as found in Indian buddhistic inscriptions and his *Mahāyāna* Inscriptions in the Gupta Period. Gregory Schopen, "*Mahāyāna* in Indian Inscriptions; Schopen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181), P. 250

<sup>494</sup> Schopen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181), P. 250

<sup>495</sup> Please refer to the Chapter IX *Saṅgha*- functional unit of Monasticism for other details on *Śākyabhikṣus*

*caitya* and *Mahāyāna* before the time of Manadeva I.<sup>496</sup> A *Licchavī* inscription from Patan Chapatole which is supposed to be of Amśuvarma time mentions presence of *Mahāyāna Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha* in Nepal.<sup>497</sup> Even the kings were declared followers of *Mahāyāna* as from the colophon of a Manuscript of *Prajñāpāramitā* copied in 1119 A.D. which mentions the king Sinhadeva as ‘*pravara-Mahāyānayāyin*’ meaning a staunch follower of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*.<sup>498</sup> It is understandable that they later converted into *Vajrayāna*. Some even attained *ācāryahood* and become *vajrācārya* following *Vajrayāna Buddhism*. In the beginning they were not bound by casteism, anybody could become *Śākyabhikṣu* or *vajrācārya* from any caste and creed. Their conversion into castes took place in medieval period.<sup>499</sup>

Therefore, with the emergence of *Śākyabhikṣus*, *Mahāyāna* evolved. This is equally true in case of India, as it can be understood from inscriptions and writings of modern scholars who made scientific study on history of *Buddhism* in India<sup>500</sup>, and also in Nepal. Equally true is the fact that whatever sect became dominant in particular period in neighbouring Indian territories, the same were seen in Nepalese context.<sup>501</sup> Study and recitation practice of most of the scriptures of *Navavaipulya sūtras* had already begun in *Licchavī* period signifying that *Mahāyāna* was prevalent at that time.<sup>502</sup>

Remarkable change in monasticism of Nepal is the blend of monastic and house holder scheme in *Buddhist* religious practice. *Newār Buddhist* practitioners seemed

---

<sup>496</sup> *Nāgarika* daily, dated May 20, 2012 (Monday, Jestha 7, 2069). The inscription is mentioned in the News head ‘*Swayambhū*’ on 1500 years old Stone inscription. According to Department of Archaeology it is the first ever *Licchavī* inscription bearing the clear word ‘*Swayambhū*’ proving that *Swayambhū* existed before Manadeva time and from that time it was called *Swayambhū*. The inscription was written in *Saṅskrit* and *Licchavī* script on the base part of the stone image which is yet to be found. However, the image could be guessed to be of *Amitabha Buddha* on the ground of meaning of the text and peacock symbol inscribed. It also indicates that *Pañca-buddha* cult must have been prevalent in that period i.e around 514 A.D, the time of Basantdeva, the grandson of Manadeva.

<sup>497</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 382-383

<sup>498</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Col. No.74

<sup>499</sup> For other details, please see the chapter “History of Monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*” in page No. 201

<sup>500</sup> Scophen, and Cohen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181),

<sup>501</sup> Jagdish Chandra Regmi, *Historical Glimpses of Nepal Buddhism*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Antiquary, 2004), P. 53

<sup>502</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 388

to follow *bodhisattva* path (*Mahāyāna*) being a *bodhisattva* who also undergoes monastic ordination but prefer to remain householder, *grihapati* in course of *Buddhist* practice. This pattern is attested by earlier *Mahāyāna* text, *Ugrapariprcchā sūtra*, an earlier *Mahāyāna* text, in which the protagonist and his companions chose to remain as householders even after obtaining ordination.<sup>503</sup> He is repeatedly referred to as eminent ‘House holder (*gṛhapati*). Such a title is, however, completely inappropriate to a renunciant, as it refers to a man’s status in lay society. The ordination ritual did not result in their (*Ugra* and his friends) becoming full-fledged *Bhikṣus* in the normal sense. The text gives message that that even when one is engaging in strict *Buddhist* practice, he is fundamentally dwelling at the household level.<sup>504</sup> It seems no different from the system of monasticism followed in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. *Mahāyāna* quite freely portrays bodhisattvas as living within the framework of the traditional monastic setting.<sup>505</sup> At the point of transition from lay to monastic sections of the *sūtra*, there is the scene in which *Ugra*, the interlocutor and his friends request and receive ordination to be *Bhikṣus*, declaring that they have well understood the *Buddha*’s teaching of the superiority of monastic over the lay state, they prefer practicing the *dharma* as the householder.<sup>506</sup> Like most *sūtras* the *Ugrapariprcchā* is highly prescriptive setting forth norms of conduct for the ideal practitioners in both categories-monastic and householders.<sup>507</sup> The presentation in the text<sup>508</sup> shows how a lay *bodhisattva* can lead a renunciant life in householder condition. The bifurcation of the *Buddhist* community into householder and renunciant practitioners may thus be viewed as part of the very fabric of the world within which the *Ugrapariprcchā* was

---

<sup>503</sup> Nattier , *Op.cit.* (f.n. 486), P. 38

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74

<sup>505</sup> *Ibid*, P. 174

<sup>506</sup> *Ibid*, P. 62

<sup>507</sup> *Ibid*, P. 40

<sup>508</sup> *Ugrapariprcchā* (The Inquiry of *Ugra*) is the most influential *Mahāyāna Sūtra*, which now does not exist in *Saṅskṛit* original. The text is believed to be formed prior to emergence of *Prajñāpāramitā*, a popular highly esteemed *Mahāyāna* text. It was among the first *Buddhist* sutra to be transmitted from India to China. It was translated into Chinese no fewer than six times between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is available in Chinese and *Tibetan*. It is included as a part in *Ratnakūta* in *Kanjur*, the *Tibetan* canonical scripture. The great *Mahāyānapuṇḍit*, Śāntideva seems influenced by the text which he mentioned several times in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, a popular text in Nepal. Similarly, its references were cited by Kamaraḥjiva in his translated work, *Daśabhumikavibhāṣā*.

produced.<sup>509</sup> In other words, such *Mahāyāna* text induced *Buddhist* practice through householder mode.

Similarly, *Suramgāmasamādhi Sūtra*<sup>510</sup>, another earlier *Mahāyāna sūtra* has illustrated *Bodhisattva* way of life citing the instruction of *Buddha* to Dridhamati, a *Bodhisattva*. According to this *sūtra*, *Bodhisattva* behaves as lay person in heretical manner avoiding arrogance (*manyānā*) of a monk, but does not deviate from his practice of religious life. He seems to adopt the bodily attitudes (*iryāpatha*) of the heretics (*pāsandika*), but does not conduct himself in accordance with them. In short he does not look like fully *pravrajita*. This worthy man acts as a guide (*parināyaka*) for other lay persons. The description resembled those characters exhibited by *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* of *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

Another *Mahāyāna* text, *Vimalkīrtinirdeśa sūtra* also seems to have been instrumental in adoption of householder *Buddhist* practitioners under *Mahāyāna* tradition. *Vimalakīrti*, a disciple of *Buddha*, is a householder in *Buddhist* circles as the ideal of a layman who achieved greater holiness than most persons attain by following the monastic discipline. A place was reserved on the court calendar in Japan for reading and expounding the text which tells the story of his virtues. “Praised by all the *Buddhas*, revered by all the disciples and all the gods,” his memory has been kept alive as the paragon of lay sanctity.

Though *Vimalakīrti* was but a simple layman, yet observing the pure monastic discipline; though living at home, yet never desirous of anything; though possessing a wife and children, always exercising pure virtues; though surrounded by his family, holding aloof from worldly pleasures; though using the jeweled ornaments of the world, yet adorned with spiritual splendor; though eating and drinking, yet enjoying the flavor of the rapture of meditation; though frequently at the gambling house, yet leading the gamblers into the right path; though coming in contact with heresy, yet never letting his true faith be impaired; though having a profound knowledge of worldly learning, yet ever finding pleasure in things of the spirit as taught by *Buddha*.

---

<sup>509</sup> Nattier, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 486), P. 74

<sup>510</sup> Etienne Lamotte, *SURANGĀMĀSAMĀDHISŪTRA, The concentration of Heroic Progress, An Early Mahayana Buddhist Scripture*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2003), P. 132

The texts like *Ugrapariprechhā*, *Suramgāmāsamādhi Sūtra*, *Vimalkīrtinirdeśa sūtras* etc are the product of a community in which both the *bodhisattva* and the *śrāvaka* paths were still viewed as legitimate, indeed admirable, a religious vocations.<sup>511</sup> This can well be seen in Nepal. *Mahāyāna* can also be speculative, but its approach to the laity is normally through personalities rather than abstractions, and the fame of Vimalakīrti is indicative of a tendency in this type of *Buddhism* that has the merit of ready appeal to men of the world, but the disadvantage of being subject to their schisms and secular tastes.

Once *Mahāyāna* was established in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, it provided fertile ground for the development of *Vajrayāna*. History also proves that *Vajrayāna* was the further extension of *Mahāyāna* with the incorporation of *mantra* and *tantra*. *Gokarṇa* inscription of Amśuvarma time bearing the word ‘*Vajrayāna*’ and *Gorakhā Gorakhnāth* inscription mentioning about the worship of *Vajravairava Bhattaraka* dated 698 A.D of Śivadeva II period confirm the prevalence of *Vajrayāna* in *Lichchavī* period. However, *Lichchavī* period also reveals parallel existence and growth of the sects- *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Sarvāstivāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* before they culminated into what is known today as *Newār Buddhism* in early Medieval period.

Life with its dynamism does not allow any institution whether religious or secular to remain static. It demands continuous adaptation and change. *Buddhist* monasticism witnessed such a transformation as time went by. There arose sects and schools named after some prominent teachers, place or after the kind of doctrinal viewpoint professed. Each with its increasingly distinctive emphasis on *Dhamma* existed side by side with others as members of universal *Sanḥa*. But, to ignore the historical development and transformations of the customs would be paradoxical given the fact that *Mahāyāna Buddhism*’s own view of itself posits historically distinct and successive layers: early *Buddhism* or *Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* respectively. It is possible to see even the last of these layers as in fact continuous with the others, despite obvious differences. Similarly, it can be concluded on the ground of above points (there can other points too) that

---

<sup>511</sup> Nattier, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 486), P. 174

*Sarvāstivāda* must also have been strong force besides *Mahāsāṃghikā* in shaping *Newār Buddhist* monasticism as it stood today.

*Newār Buddhists* knew all the three ways of *Buddhism* i.e. *Śrāvakayāna*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* along with the three types of enlightened beings. *Bodhisattva* concept or *Mahāyāna* represents only an elaboration and not a rejection of *Śrāvakayāna*.<sup>512</sup> Elements of these three dominating schools are still seen along with *Vajrayānic* one in the monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The different deities of all the three popular vehicles are enshrined in the monastery: the *Buddha Śākyamuni* belongs to the *Śrāvakayāna* (*Sarvāstivāda* or *Theravāda*), the *bodhisttvas* to the great way-*Mahāyāna*, and Great *Buddha* ‘*Vajrasattva* or *Vajradhara*’ and the esoteric deities to the Diamond way (*Vajrayāna*). All these deities and the respective practices are the paraphernalia of Nepalese monasticism. The three ways also provide a model of *Buddhist* history: as a matter of historical fact the types of *Buddhism* represented by the three ways did arise in that order, and the texts of the later forms reveal an awareness of this. It may be due to the fact this structure is built into the rite of Monastic Initiation in which the neophyte passed from being a monk to becoming a householder.<sup>513</sup> However, with the adoption of *Vajrayāna* in the valley, the changes in monasticism deepened and became more conspicuous. But in want of knowledge about the true history in tracing the continuity of monasticism in Nepal, the changes seen as the result stood unique because the main contributing factors like *Mahāsāṃghikā* and *Sarvāstivāda* were no more existing except as remnants in the form of changes.

---

<sup>512</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 108-110

<sup>513</sup> David N. Gellner, *The Anthropology of Buddhism & Hinduism, Weberian Themes*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), P. 120

## CHAPTER IX

### Monastic life-style

In the beginning of the order of *Buddhist* monks and nuns founded by *Śākyamuni Buddha* during his lifetime, *Buddhist* monastic lifestyle grew out of the lifestyle of earlier sects of wandering ascetics, some of whom the *Buddha* had studied under. It was not really isolationist or eremitic in nature. The *Saṅgha* members dependent on the lay community for basic provisions of food and clothing, were to guide the lay followers on the path of *Dharma*. Later, monastic lifestyle has undergone many changes and transformation. It developed distinctive unique form in *Nepal-maṇḍalā*. Monastics exercises or exhibit their religious activities overtly in monasteries. And, their way of life in the monasteries is the monasticism.<sup>514</sup>

*Buddhist* monastic lifestyle is to act diligently not to do any evil, to cultivate good and to purify one's mind following the teaching of the *Buddhas*.<sup>515</sup> In other words, this is simply to lead blameless way of life helping mankind. *Buddhists* traditionally consider monastic life to provide the environment most conducive to advancing toward enlightenment. The purpose of the *Buddhist* monastic code is to establish optimal conditions for the achievement of liberation. The monastic life is designed to have few distractions, and more opportunity to work at diminishing *rāga*, *dweṣa*, and *moha* (greed, hatred and delusion) and to guide others in doing so. The aim of monastic life is to help diminish attachment to self and its consequent desires and aversion. Observing the precepts and vows helps beings control the passions that entangle them in *samsara* and foster the awareness needed to precipitate liberation. Following monasticism, the practitioners purify their mind through wholesome deeds bodily, verbally and mentally which mean to stay away from ten unwholesome actions.<sup>516</sup>

---

<sup>514</sup> Advanced Learner's Dictionary, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 49), P. 751

<sup>515</sup> Narada, *The Dhammapada*, (Colombo: B.M.S Publication, 1978), P. 185. (*Dhammapada* 14-5)

<sup>516</sup> The ten unwholesome actions are killing, stealing, sexual misconduct perpetrated through body, false speech, harsh words, slander, garrulous talk perpetrated through verbal speech, covetousness, ill will, and wrong view perpetrated through mind.



The monastics in *Nepal-maṇḍalā* follow *Vajrayānic* ideal aiming at Buddhahood in order to benefit others (*Buddho vāyam jagato hitāya*) and at benefitting others by any means (*sarva prakāram jagato hitāya*). Their practice is based on *Svayambhū purāṇa* and they frequently visit *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* as a part of religious practice. They formed a vital and energetic community of practitioners who adhere to a set of practices revolving around the narrative of the *Svayambhū purāṇa*. Monasteries (*Vihāras*) served as centres for the socio-religious affairs of the entire *Buddhist* community.<sup>517</sup> The religions like *Buddhism* is mostly described to have two serving aims soteriological and thisworldly. The later has two ways of implications giving rise to social religion and Instrumental religion.<sup>518</sup> *Newār Buddhism* does not see itself in the light of pure *Buddhist* teaching. Rather, it views in the light of the *Mahāyāna*, and more particularly of the *Svayambhū purāṇa* and related indigenous literature, which after all is taken to render the words of the *Buddha*. This emic perspective shows that rather than clinging to the earlier form of *Buddhism*, *Newār Buddhism* emerges as an intact tradition, and as an example bearing out how adaptable a religion *Buddhism* proved to be over the vast expanse of space and time.<sup>519</sup> Perspectives in the *Svayambhū purāṇa* not envisaging *Buddhism* as soteriology but meeting worldly means, are in fact maintaining the *Bodhisattva* ideal instead of the celibate monk.<sup>520</sup>

A group of Scholars assume it reasonable that renunciatory monkhood gave way to the institution for hereditary monks who disrobe only three days after their ordination in order to become ordinary, married householders for the rest of their live. Hence, it was but natural to integrate the institution of monkhood into society for if there can be liberation in *Newār Buddhism* it can, in a sense, only be within, not outside society. The practice in *Newār Buddhism* only assumes a soteriological orientation to the extent that this is compatible with the demands of society and its instincts of self-perpetuation.<sup>521</sup> The collective practice of *Buddhism* by *Newārs* drawing the great sense of satisfaction and joy accounts for the outstanding vitality that *Newār Buddhism* has preserved to this day. *Newār Buddhists*, leave little scope

<sup>517</sup> Slusser, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 1), P. 288.

<sup>518</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P.6

<sup>519</sup> Alexander von Rospatt, "The Survival of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in Nepal – A Fresh Appraisal": in *Buddhismus im Geschichte und Gegenwart* 5, (Hamburg: Universitat Hamburg, Weiterbildendes Studium, 2002), S. 168 -189, P. 188

<sup>520</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>521</sup> *Ibid*, P. 187

for individualism and the aspiration to transcend society and pursue an existence outside its framework. The practice of *Buddhism* is like most other activities pursued collectively within the framework of society.<sup>522</sup> *Newār* monasticism is practiced within society, and very much as part of it, and that as a consequence there is only as much scope for *Buddhism*'s soteriological dimension as this very close-knit society allows for. It does not mean that the concept of emancipation is entirely absent in *Newār Buddhism* as the esoteric forms of higher *tantric* practice are soteriological in nature. Monastics practice their soteriological activities personally mostly in their esoteric chamber or in seclusion and thisworldly activities openly with the laity in the society. *Newār* Monastics (*Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*) are often praised to have found ways of combining everyday life and religion. They used to chant *Buddhist* hymns while they worked. And their life is indeed such as to permit a considerable amount of religious activity while they work. They do perform more rituals as an expression of their monastic identity. *Buddhist* monastic tradition of today has its root connected to the initiatives taken by Śāntikarācārya in upholding the *ācārya* tradition in *Buddhism*, the *Saṅghas* have been instituted in Nepal from the time immemorial.

Many earlier rulers of ancient and medieval period played significant role in the lives of the Nepalese people and the growth of their distinctive national identity. Likewise, several local enlightened religious personages contributed significantly. They have left their marked influence on the history of *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal up to the beginning of the 20th century. But due to inadequate historical records, some of them remained disguised in legendary accounts. For example the biographical account of historical personalities like Lilāvajra, Suratvajra, Vakvajra, Sāswatvajra etc. mostly include legendary description. Nepalese *Buddhism* derives much from the genius of the persons, all of whom are unanimously acclaimed as the spiritual ancestors mainly of *Mahāyāna- Vajrayāna Buddhism*. Although numerous scholar-saints and sages of different traditions of *Buddhism* appeared in Nepal and established many monasteries throughout the Nepal valley with the *Saṅgha* therein, now the distinctive and unique *Newār* monastic tradition exists.

Traditionally, the monastics (*Śākya/Vajrācāryas*) occupied the supreme position which in Nepalese *Buddhist* society both as temporal and spiritual leaders. And, the

---

<sup>522</sup> *Ibid*, P. 186

privileges that they enjoy, as well as the deep religious habits of the people, all combined to contribute to monastic lifestyle. Every monastic family dedicate its sons to the monastery. The compulsory admission of male members from the descendants of the monastics to the *Saṅgha* after undergoing ordination is still extant.

In the Nepalese monastic tradition, *Buddha* is envisioned as *Ādi-guru*<sup>523</sup>, *Dharma* as way to *Nirvāṇa* and *Saṅgha* as the representation of the *Buddha*. *Guru* has the supreme position. The monastics always follow *Guru-maṇḍalā* rite in every religious performance. *Guru-maṇḍalā* encapsulates ritualistically refuge to triple gems and highlights the role of the *guru*. For this reason, the stanza ‘*Guru-Buddha, guru-Dharma, guru-Saṅgha tathaivaca, guru vajradharascaiva tasmai Śrī guruve namah*’ (meaning salutation to *guru* as *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha* as well as *guru* as *Vajradhara*) is very popular in Nepal. The *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual is significant in *Newār Buddhism*. This rite is the first ritual performed by a *vajrācārya* at the beginning of every *pūjā* for purification of oneself, his *jajamān* (parishioner) and the surrounding area. This performance may be equated in meaning to that of *Theravādins* taking *pañcaśīla* (promises of morality), and also to that of *Hindus* giving the gift of cow before undertaking any good work.<sup>524</sup> The *Guru-maṇḍalā* can be described a means for the veneration and offering made to the *Guru*, the Teacher, (the triple gems- *Guru Buddha*, *Guru Dharma* and *Guru Saṅgha*) who is represented by *Vajrasattva*. The deity being worshipped is also considered to be the *vajrācārya*’s *Guru*. The *maṇḍalā* in question is the Mt. Meru *maṇḍalā* which is offered ritualistically to the *Guru*.<sup>525</sup> The most remarkable point in *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual performance is repeated offering of parched rice and unbroken rice to the accompaniment of the popular *Buddhist* motto ‘*Yedharmā hetuprabhavā*’ recitation.<sup>526</sup> All *Buddhist* sects, *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhists* alike have at least accepted this formula as a summation of

<sup>523</sup> *Ādi-Buddha* – All pervasive omniscient teaching/teacher who prevails from beginningless to endless time. It is the *Dharmakāya* (the truth body or doctrinal body). It is represented by *Vajradhara* or *Vajrasattva*.

<sup>524</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 85-87

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>526</sup> Full form ‘*ye dharma hetu prabhavā hetu te sām tathāgato hyuvadatah, tesām ca yo nirodha avamvādi Mahāsramaṇa*’ meaning – “Whatever phenomena are produced by a cause, the *tathāgata* revealed the cause of those. The cessation of those, too, the great *Śramaṇa* has revealed”

the *Buddha's* teachings and have used it as a motto or slogan. Custom of performing *Guru-maṇḍalā* in Nepal also justifies the saying that instead of concept of *Tri-ratna* (triple gems), *Catu-ratna* (Quadri gems) concept prevailed in *Nepalese Buddhism*, the fourth gem being the *Guru*.<sup>527</sup> Sarāhapāda, a *siddhā* and advocate of *Sahajayāna*, of 8<sup>th</sup> century was credited to have introduced the concept. His other influence has been already mentioned in earlier chapter.

Everyday lifestyle of monastics is governed by *Dharma* containing *Buddhist* philosophical principles. Their monastic practice include meditation, *yoga*, *Prāṇāyām* (*nyāsa*), study, teaching, recitation of scriptures, hymns, rituals worships and so forth which are carried out on daily, regular, monthly, annual or occasional basis. From the time they wake up in the morning till going to bed, they spend time in religious contemplation and activities through their deeds and words. Gellner<sup>528</sup> was impressed at the amount of time, energy and money expended by *Newār Buddhists* on religion and rituals.

Three principal courses of monastic lifestyle of the monks in pursuit of ancient *Buddhist* monasticism are found mentioned on the *Mahāyāna* texts like *Akāśagarbhā*, and *Bodhisattvabhūmi* of *Yogācārabhūmi*. They are (1) devotion to service, (2) devotion to study and preaching, and (3) devotion to meditation and personal cultivation to the physical, the intellectual and the contemplative.<sup>529</sup> It is obvious that these are included in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism which is also governed by *Mahāyāna* ideals. It has been already clarified above that *Newār Buddhist* practice has both monastic part and householder part. *Śrāvakyānacaryā* is for the monastic part of tradition and it's main figure is the Buddha *Śākyamuni*. The term *Mahāyāna* is sometimes, though less systematically, used by *Newārs* to refer to Tibetan *Buddhism*, is opposed to the *Vajrayāna Buddhism* of Nepal. The central figure in *Mahāyāna* is the *Bodhisattva*. In *Vajrayāna*, also called diamond way, the great *Buddha- Vajrasattva* and esoteric deities play central role.<sup>530</sup>

In *Newār* monasticism *Śrāvakyāna* activity has been put in a *Mahāyāna* framework in a typical *Newārī Buddhist* style. The same is true of observances, and it is also

<sup>527</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), Pp. 54, & 56

<sup>528</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 33

<sup>529</sup> Silk, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 472), Pp. 17-20

<sup>530</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 113

true of the iconography of the *Śrāvakyāna* part of the monastery; the shrine of the main deity, who explicitly stands for the *Śrāvakyāna* part of *Newār Buddhism*, is usually decorated with paintings and statues of *Tārā*, *Avalokiteśvars*, and other *Mahāyānist* deities. In addition there are symbols given in a diamond way interpretation and the struts often display many armed *tāntric* forms of the Five *Buddhas* (*Pañca-Buddha*) or the five protective deities (*Pañca-rakṣā*).<sup>531</sup>

## 9.1 The traditional way to relate to Monastics

*Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal valley was marked by transformations and continuities. Some of them are easily noticeable while some are embedded in their culture in response to the waves of social and cultural changes and are most of time overtly not visible. However, introduction of the neophytes into the monasticism is always obvious and important. It is celebrated in the form of ceremony. Once introduced, they pursue their religious goal till the end of their life.

### 9.1.1 Being Part of the Community

Becoming a *Buddhist* monastic means that one is joining an order of community – the *Saṅgha* – the purpose of which is to study and practice the *Buddha*'s teachings in order to keep them alive, and whenever possible, to share them with others.<sup>532</sup> *Buddhism* provides two paradigmatic ways of life for the pursuit of *Dharma* practice. One is the way of lay followers or laity which begets compliance of instructions intended for householders by the *Buddha* as mentioned in the *sutras* like *Gahatthavatta-Dhammikā sutta*<sup>533</sup>, *Dīghajānu sutta* (also called *Vyāghrapajja Sutta*)<sup>534</sup>, *Sigālovāda Sutta* (*Gṛihī vinaya*)<sup>535</sup> etc. and by those made by the monastics or the monks. They form the group *Upasaka* (male) and *Upasikā* (female). They follow the path honouring the monastics, their spiritual leader and guide. Laity are encouraged to work sincerely in various professions avoiding ten

<sup>531</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 186

<sup>532</sup> Surendra Man Bajracharya, *Buddhist Heritage of Northern Nepal-An Introduction*, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 2008), P. 139

<sup>533</sup> *Sutta Nipāt*, *Samyukta Nikāya*

N.A. Jayawickrama, *Sutta Nipāt, Text and Translation*, (Kelaniya: Post graduate Institute of Pāli & Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, 2001), P. 149-156

<sup>534</sup> *Dīghajānu Sutta*, *Anguttara Nikāya*

<sup>535</sup> *Sigālovāda Sutta*, *Dīrgha Nikāya*

unwholesome deeds, with love and sympathy among themselves. This way is described as “*Pravriti Mārga*” meaning *samsāric* or worldly.

Another is the way of monastics or monks who train themselves to be the masters through their continuous indulgence in religious and spiritual affairs. The way is mentioned as “*Nivritti Mārga*” (way to salvation-*Nirvāṇa*). However, the former way also aims at salvation. The practitioners of this way devote maximum time in their *Dharma* practice. They spend time in doing essential daily work and rest of the time is devoted to religious and spiritual exercise. They are supported by the laity in several ways so that they get enough time for their practice. Laity practice in guidance of the monastics who are mostly aided by their scriptures and teachers. In other words, monastics are the learned and elite persons who attain mastery by rigorous study and practice.

#### 9.1.1.1 Monastic Admission

As universal to all *Buddhist* traditions, the *Pravajyā*<sup>536</sup> ordination is essential for every individual who desires the membership of the *Saṅgha* and follow *Buddhist* monasticism. *Pravajyā* is the *Saṅskrit* term used from ancient times for the first rite of initiation given to a layman wishing to become a *Buddhist* monk.<sup>537</sup> The neophyte with due faith obtains *Pravajyā* before being a member of the *Saṅgha*. Therefore, the meaning of *Pravajyā*, the initial conversion and entry into the monasticism is retained in several *Buddhist* literature. In most of the current *Buddhist* traditions like in *Theravāda*, the initial monk initiation is the *Pravajyā* which provides license to monkhood. Later, the ordained monk receives higher ordination called *Upasampadā*. But, in the case of *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, *Upasampadā* is omitted. In its place, several other forms of higher initiations are given to the ordained *Pravrajita* according to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* pantheons. This is the main significance crucial to *Newār Buddhist* tradition which stood on their own philosophy and hermeneutic mandated by *Buddhist* literature of later phase. Later initiation is the gateway to *Vajrayāna* practice. The initiation confers upon one the requisite power to accomplish Buddhahood through meditation upon a particular *Buddha* deity.<sup>538</sup>

<sup>536</sup> The making of a monk, locally known as *bare chyuyegu*

<sup>537</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 42

<sup>538</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 532), P. 140

The earliest formula for admission to the *Saṅgha* was ‘*Ehi Bhikkhu*’ or ‘*Etha bhikkhavo*’ (meaning “come, O monks”), which was the one used by the *Buddha* himself.<sup>539</sup> Nothing was required at the very first ordination. Afterwards, when candidates coming from different parts for admission to *Saṅgha* grew in number and became too many for the leader to confer ordination himself, the formula changed. A formula of confession of faith- the *saranāgamaṇa* was prescribed instead. At a later stage when *āvāsas* and residential *Saṅghas* had come into being, the ordination became an act- *Saṅghakamma* for the *Saṅgha*.<sup>540</sup> Later, senior and competent disciples were authorized to admit new novices to the *Saṅgha* as the number of candidates seeking admission grew when the *dharma* spread.<sup>541</sup>

The foremost source, *Mahāvastu* elucidates the rules concerning the ordination of novices while recounting Rahula’s admission to the order. Since *Buddha*’s time, admission to the *Saṅgha* is offered after the novices were instructed with gradual preliminary teachings (*anupūrvīya dharmadeśanā*). Under this the candidate should first be communicated the gradual teaching, namely a discourse on giving (*dāna*), a discourse on morality, a discourse on heaven, explanation on the peril, vanity and depravation of the sense pleasures as well as the advantage of renouncing them. When the candidate’s mind is prepared, pliable, free of hindrances, then he is taught in full the excellent doctrinal account namely Four Noble Truths. Having taken refuge in Triple gems, he is now deemed a lay follower. He is later given *Pravrajyā* upon his request to practice the pure conduct (*Brahmacaryā*). There are several texts both local in vernacular language and old ones written in *Saṁskṛit* language concerning the ordination of monks in *Newār* society. Some of them have been translated into English. These texts are directly or indirectly based on the text “*Kriyā Saṁgraha*” composed or compiled by *Ācārya* Kuladutta of 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>542</sup> It is said that the text was written by *Nāgarjunapāda* by the name “*Kriyā Saṁgrahakārikā*”, and the *Tantric ācārya*, Kuladutta produced commentary on it which became popular as *Kriyā Saṁgrahapañjikā*.<sup>543</sup> However, it is clear that the

<sup>539</sup> Sukumar Dutta, *Early Buddhist Monachism*, (New Delhi: Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996), P. 146

<sup>540</sup> *Ibid*, P. 146

<sup>541</sup> D.C. Ahir, *The Status of the Laity in Buddhism*, *Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series No. 171*, (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, A Division of Indian books Centre, 1996), P. 59

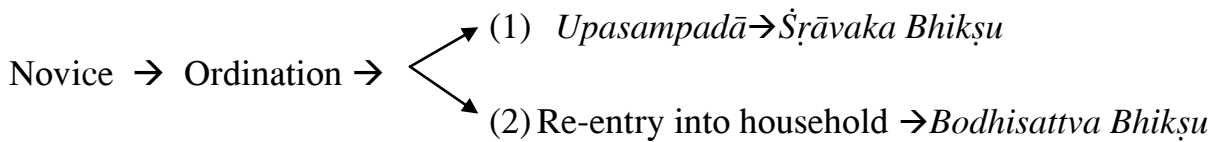
<sup>542</sup> Rospatt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 519), P. 178

<sup>543</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 173), Pp. 13-14

authentic and original source of ordination procedure adopted by *Newār Buddhists* remained *Kriyā Saṅgraha* for centuries till now.

According to Itsing, the great Chinese traveler scholar of 7<sup>th</sup> century, one desirous of joining the *Saṅgha* had first to select a teacher to whom he would express his wish. The teacher would accept him as candidate and leave him at leisure for ten days or a month after which he would impart to him the five *śikṣāpadas*. Thereafter he would arrange a *pata* (simple cloak), a *sankakśika*, a *nivāsana*, a bowl and filter and would address himself to the *Saṅgha* and relate the candidate's desire. When the *Saṅgha* permitted the candidate, the teacher would ask the *ācārya* to conduct the ceremony. The candidate had to get his head and beard shaved and after taking a bath, would make him a *pravrajita*. Next, in the presence of the *upādhyāya*, the *ācārya* would impart to him the ten *śikṣāpadas*. This completes *Pravajyā* after which, the recipient becomes the monk. More or less the same process is still followed. Usually, after some period when the monk attains age of twenty, he is conferred *Upasampadā*, following which he has to comply by all the *vinaya* rules (227 rules in *Indian* tradition and 253 rules in *Tibetan* tradition).<sup>544</sup>

Getting ordination is entering into monasticism. After receiving *Pravajyā*, two separate courses of monastic life open up for the newly ordained novice, he can lead the life of *Śrāvaka bhikṣu* following *upsampadā* or the life of *bodhisattva bhikṣu* reentering household.<sup>545</sup>



In the Nepalese context, instead of undergoing the next step of higher ordination called *Upasampadā*, the ordained novice seeks permission to lead life of householder monk. In other words, *upasampadā* is avoided and the *pravrajita śramaṇera* follows second course. Since he had received ten *śikṣāpada* and committed to serving Triple Gems and undergoes other succeeding higher initiations, he reserves the status of monk and is allowed membership of the monk

<sup>544</sup> Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362), P. 24

<sup>545</sup> Divyavajra Bajracharya(Tr.), *Śikṣā Samuccaya of Śāntideva*, unpublished, (Kathmandu: Lotus Research Centre), P. 66



community-the *Saṅgha*. It cannot be denied that later *Mahāyānic Bodhisattva* ideals, *Vajrayānic* philosophy and path provided him enough ground to practice *Dharma* being a householder monk. The causes of omission of *Upasampadā* in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism may be speculated as follows.

- (i) Exemption of *Upasampadā* in *Newār* ordination may be the concession granted to *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* as they were regarded as the kinsmen of *Śākyamuni Buddha* or *Śākya* clan. Such concession had been made to the *Śākyas* of India by waiving *parivāsa* procedure (preliminary part of ordination before *Upasampadā*).<sup>546</sup>
- (ii) The *Upasampadā* is nothing else but the solemn consecration of the *pravrajyā* and it is given to those who already have received *pravajyā* entering the order.<sup>547</sup> In other words, it is like reconfirmation of being a monk. Therefore, it is deemed less important.
- (iii) *Upasampadā* is not given to *Newār Buddhists* as they have to lead life of householder monk. *Upsampadā* is considered mandatory to those who wish to remain full celibate monks.
- (iv) *Upasampadā* could not be conferred on a youth of less than twenty. Most of the *Newār Buddhists* get ordination before the age twenty.<sup>548</sup> So, *Upasampadā* is not considered appropriate for them. There is belief that it is not appropriate to confer ordination to aged person (old person) since the old man is deficient in three regards: he is incapable of study, meditation, and assisting in the affairs of monastic community. Even the *Buddha's* eminent disciple, Sariputra became hesitant to ordain an old man.<sup>549</sup> This must be the reason that ordination is conferred to the boys at their tender age.
- (v) Furthermore, *Upasampadā*, according to *Vinaya Pitaka* is not recommended for certain monks. An excerpt from it goes as follows- 'Monks whatever monks should come, without having disavowed the training, without

<sup>546</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f. n. 539ii), P. 148

<sup>547</sup> Kern, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 410i), P. 77

<sup>548</sup> Hazra, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 352), P. 132

<sup>549</sup> Silk, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 472), P. 24

declaring his weakness, and indulge in sexual intercourse, he should not receive the *Upasampadā* ordination.<sup>550</sup> Since, *Newār Buddhists* intend to practice *dharma* in house hold condition, he might have exempted *Upasampadā* on this *vinaya* ground.

Except for *Upasampadā*, the process or ceremony of *Buddhist* ordination has remained almost substantially same throughout the history from ancient time after the formation of residential *Saṅgha*.<sup>551</sup> This equally applies in Nepalese context too. It is remarkable to note that in the ritual text book of *Newār Buddhist*, the *Kriyā Saṅgraha*, only details on *Pravajyā*, locally known as *bare chuyegu* are mentioned omitting the procedure of *Upasampadā* part.<sup>552</sup> This clearly shows the text is specially meant for Nepalese *Buddhists*, and such type of *Newār* ordination existed before the period of Kuladutta i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>553</sup> Furthermore, *Śrāvakyāna* rite of Monastic initiation is given a *vajrayānic* touch assigning terminology ‘*pañcāviṣeka*’ (Five consecration).<sup>554</sup>

All the *Buddhists* (monk community and *Upāsaka* community) undergo the same process of initial initiation which is popularly known as ‘*Chudākarma*’.<sup>555</sup> It is called *bare chuyegu* in local *Newārī*, and *Pravajyā* in *Saṅskrit* (*Pavajjā* in *Pāli*). However, distinction is made according to the community by the length of the initiation. In other words, the process is the longest for *Vajrācāryas* and of medium length for *Śākyas*. For lay *Buddhist* followers (*upāsaka* community), it is the shortest process. The process can be exemplified by three major events – (1) The process followed till the shaving of head except topmost crest of hair (2) Cutting the topmost crest of hair, complete tonsure of the head and (3) *Ācāryāviṣeka*

<sup>550</sup> I.B. Horner Tr., *The Book of the Disciplines (Vinaya Pitaka)*, Vol. I, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1992), P. 41

<sup>551</sup> Mahavagga I, 12 seq. 76

I.B. Horner Tr., *The Book of the Disciplines (Vinaya Pitaka)*, Vol. IV, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1993), P. 123

(ii) Hazra, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 352), P. 151

<sup>552</sup> For other details of *bare chuyegu* rite, practiced in *Nepal-mandala*, please see Literature Review on *Newār Buddhist Initiation* of John K. Locke, Pp. 73-75.

<sup>553</sup> Rospatt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 519), P. 178

<sup>554</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 295

<sup>555</sup> John K. Locke, S.J., “*Newār Buddhist initiation Rite*”, *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of The Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Kirtipur, Tribhuvan University, Edited by Dr. Prayag Raj Sharma (Chief Editor), and Dr. Subhadra Subba, Dhanavajra Bajracharya, A.W. Macdonald (Editorial board), Vol. II, No.2, Year 2032, P. 18

(initiation of *ācārya*). The lay *Buddhist* followers undergo initiation process up to first event. *Śākya* community members proceed up to the second event and become *Śākyabhikṣu* and the process till this step is called *bare chuyigu*, meaning making the *bare* or *bandhye* (venerable ones) i.e. monks while *vajrācāryas* undergoes all the three events of the process. Otherwise, all other procedures and steps including rituals, recitations are almost identical and in accordance with the method mentioned in the text '*Kriyā Saṁgrahapañjikā*'.

Having undergone *Bare chuyegu*, the boys, for next four days wearing their tiny and perfect replica of monastic garb including *cīvara*, *sāndals*, begging bowl and staff, act the role of monks. After getting ordination, the practitioner follows 'the middle way' in pursuit of spiritual goal as prescribed by the *Buddha* avoiding two extremes- indulgence in sensual pleasure and self mortification.<sup>556</sup> The purpose of *Pravrajyā* (going forth) is to keep life long commitment to live a life with minimal requirements, detached from thoughts of sensuality and objects of senses. It is therefore a self sacrifice in deed and the urge to do so should be genuine one if it is to bear pleasant fruition.

The *Cūdākarma* procedure differentiates two basic groups of the *Buddhists* (1) those who have undergone cutting the topmost crest of hair, and keep complete tonsure of the head during ordination and (2) those who retain topmost crest of hair. The first group represents the monk community and the later lay followers (*upāsaka*). Among the first group, those who do not receive *ācārya* initiation remain as *Śākyabhikṣu* while those who receive the higher initiation (*ācāryāviśeka*) become *vajrācārya*, the main stake holder of *Buddhist* monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍalā*. Therefore, all *Vajrācāryas* are *Śākyabhikṣus* while all *Śākyabhikṣus* are not *Vajrācārya*.

When a person gets his admission into the *Buddhist Saṅgha* through *pravajyā* ceremony by the formal *kammavacā*, he is then recognized as its full fledged member of the *Saṅgha* with all rights and privileges. After having undergone important *Bare* initiation rites, *Pravajyā*, and after having led the life of full fledged monk for usually four days, the monastic boys renounce the monk's life (*Śrāvakyāna*) with a long and complicated disrobing ceremony and enter into

---

<sup>556</sup> Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, (Kuala Lumpur: *Buddhist Missionary Society*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1988), P. 88

*Mahāyāna* which offer them to achieve enlightenment as householder monks. Generally, neophytes are ordained at the same monastery where their father or ancestor was ordained. But, this is not compulsory to do so, they can receive *pravajyā* in other monastery as it was revealed from the records.

#### 9.1.1.2 Making of *Vajrācārya*

The off-springs of *Vajrācāryas* undertake next initiation, *Ācā luyegu* (the making of *vajrācārya* or *Gubhāju*) immediately or after some gap of time. Usually, after *Pravajyā*, those boys who are sons of *Vajrācārya* are taken back to their *Bāhā* on another day for their final initiation, *ācā luyegu*. It is also done at a later date, sometimes postponed until after marriage, as in Patan and Bhaktapur. However, preference is given for doing the rite soon after disrobement following transitory monkhood of four days in Kathmandu and Patan and of one day in Bhaktapur. This rite known in *Saṅskrit* as the *Pañcābhiṣeka* is performed by the eldest *Vajrācārya* of the boy's monastery. The initiation consists of five *tantric* consecrations known as *abhiṣeka*: the *Kalasābhiṣeka* (water flask consecration), *Mukutābhiṣeka* (crown consecration), *Vajrābhiṣeka* (*vajra* or diamond consecration), *Ghantābhiṣeka* (bell consecration), and *Nāmābhiṣeka* (new naming consecration) following these consecrations the candidates are given *mantra* of *Herukacakrasaṃvara*, different from the one they were given before. The *mantra* is always passed from *Guru* to disciple and never divulged or written down even in the ritual texts. The rite is carried on at the *āgan* of the monastery except in Thimi where the ordained novices are taken to *Pīṭha*<sup>557</sup> (power place) for the rite. The incumbents are given a *vajra* and a *bell* to hold in hand and a *Mukhah* (crown with *Pañca-Buddha* image) to wear on the head.

*Ācā luyegu* ensures their right to act as family priest. *Vajrācārya*'s son failing to receive *Ācā luyegu* becomes a *Bare* of the *Śākya* kind. *Ācā luyegu* confers on the novice the right to perform a limited range of *Vajrayāna* rituals, consisting of those routine rites mostly associated with client's life cycle and with purificatory rites. They do not however give the right to perform esoteric *vajrayānic* rituals known as *Guhya* (secret *Pūjā*) unless *vajrācārya* take another Initiation, *Dekhā* (*Dikṣā* in *Saṅskrit*). Later they (*Śākyas*, *Vajrācāryas* and others like *Tulādhars*) can receive

<sup>557</sup> The *Śakti Peethas* (holy places of cosmic power) are places of worship consecrated to the goddess *Asta mātrikā* or *Ajīmā* or *Yoginī*.

higher initiation, *Dekhā* (entering to esoteric or mystic practice).<sup>558</sup> But further initiations which they receive later empower *vajrācāryas* only to perform the *homa* sacrifice too. A *vajrācārya* is entitled to have *jajamāns*, i.e. clients or parishioners for whom he acts as priest. He can still exert sufficient social pressure to assert their traditional rights.

The initiation rite of *Bare* reflects the historical development of the customs of the *Newār Buddhist* community and define the status of the *Bare* in present day *Newār Society*. The *San̄gha* of the monastery is a direct successor of the *Bhikṣu San̄gha* of earlier days. The *Vajrācārya* acts as priest for the *Buddhist* families and for services in the *Bāhās* when this involves the offering of the *homa* sacrifice, the conferring of initiations, and the consecration of images. They are the custodians of these ancient shrines which were, and to a lesser degree still are, the focal points of the religious life of the *Buddhist* community.

#### 9.1.1.3 Higher Initiations

There is provision for the aspirants acquire higher initiations known as *Dekhā* in *Newārī* or “*Daśabhiṣeka Dīkṣā Vidhi*” in *Saṁskṛit*, or simply the *Ācārya Dīkṣā* (“initiation of *Ācārya*”), which the *Bare* may take at a later time.<sup>559</sup> The term *dīkṣā* means a spiritual initiation accompanied by the giving of a *mantra* as per *vajrayānic* tradition. The *ācārya dīkṣā* is an initiation into the *maṇḍala* of *Heruka Cakrasamvara* and his consort *Vajrabārāhi* along with conferring of ten consecrations (*abhiṣeka*) and seven *mantras*. The first series of consecrations given are the same as the one given to the *Vajrācārya* in his initiation rite. The *ācā luyegu* is, in fact, a shortened form of the *ācārya dīkṣā*. The *dīkṣā* is given at irregular intervals by skilled and learned *Vajrācāryas* who have taken the *dīkṣā* themselves and have a reputation as learned *Gurus*. The *Guru* and his wife, who are visualized *Herukacakrasamvara* and his consort, give the initiation to the candidate and his wife; the culmination of the rite is the identification of the candidate and his wife with the *Guru* and his wife, and consequently with *Herukacakrasamvara*. This seems the rite is totally for householder groups having family. As with so many of the *Mahāyāna* rites, the philosophy behind all of this and the practice of the *yoga* are lost to the present generation. The whole has been

<sup>558</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 36

<sup>559</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 50

ritualized and is looked upon as an introduction to *Mahāyāna* ritual and the empowerment to perform such rituals. It is known that in former times, a long period of preparation was required to be qualified for getting *dīkṣā*. Mastery of *Saṁskṛit* grammar, study of the nine principal *Mahāyāna* texts (*Nava Vaipulya Sūtra*) which the *Vajrācāryas* consider to be their canon and mastery of meditation and yogic practice were counted as prerequisites. If one received the *dīkṣā* from a *Guru* widely renowned for his learning and *tantric* attainments, he was accorded the respect due to his *Guru*. Thereafter, the *Vajrācārya* is considered capable of performing certain *tāntric pūjā*. However, the higher initiation is not the prerogative of monastics only, individuals from other *Buddhist* communities are also permitted to undertake it. But, to whom it is given, is decided by the *Guru*, *Vajrācārya*.

*Dekhā* is large scale affairs taking place at irregular and infrequent intervals, carried out by *Vajrācārya* of outstanding fame, with his wife as joint initiator. Knowledge of non duality is given by symbolic union of *Prajñā* or wisdom (female) and *upāya* (skillful means or compassion) or method (male) ritualistically to the initiates.

*Dekhā* is optional and all monastics may not receive it. It is estimated that only 20% of *Vajrācāryas* in fact enter the profession of priesthood.<sup>560</sup> A very low percentage of the *Bare* shows interest in the *dīkṣā* at present. Two reasons are responsible for this; first, the way the *dīkṣā* is given now as a purely ritual exercise without any instruction or study preceding it has little appeal to the young today. Even preliminary requisite practices are ignored.<sup>561</sup> People mostly do not understand what the *dīkṣā* is all about, consequently look down on it. Secondly, one who undergoes *dīkṣā* has to take upon himself certain personal obligations, such as the performance of a daily *pūjā* in the *āgaṃ*, and prescribed fast at certain times of the year which most young people today find this a meaningless burden. However, those who do take the *dīkṣā* are generally very faithful to these obligations. *Dīkṣā* can be regarded as the liberal attitude of the *Newār Buddhists* as it is open, if not to all castes, at least to a larger group including lay people *udāya*. This is the one area where Nepalese monastics have managed to salvage something

<sup>560</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 35

<sup>561</sup> One should know *sūtra* before entering into the *tantra*. There are certain preliminary practices to be undertaken to avoid defilements before taking *dīkṣā*.

of the universal *Buddhist* principle that the inner core of *Buddhism* is open to all qualified candidates, but the exercise of the rights and powers conferred in the *dīkṣā* is curtailed by the regulation that only the son of a priest may function as a priest. The reason for this restriction being told in this connection is that the *Vajrācārya* are given a *mantra* of *Vajrasattva* not given to those who take the *dīkṣā* and this makes the difference. Though *dīkṣā* also included the *pañcābhiṣeka* which is given during *ācāryābhiṣeka*, it does not qualify the candidate as *Vajrācārya*. *Vajrācārya* title is inherited to sons of the *Vajrācārya* only, after having *ācāryābhiṣeka*.

*Bare chuyegu* may be said to constitute a symbolic initiation into monkhood, and *Ācā luyegu* into the profession of family priest, and the *Dekhā* constitutes an initiation into a still narrower circle of *vajrayānic* mystics.<sup>562</sup> In cultural terms, the rites initiate the boys into *Buddhist* traditions in which the three great doctrines of *Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyāna*, and *Vajrayāna* are represented as being increasing high forms and of increasingly greater relevance for the boy and the ceremonies of initiation may be viewed as an encapsulation of the whole history of *Buddhism* amongst the *Newārs*.<sup>563</sup>

## 9.2 Monastic life-style - Living with vows

*Saṅgha* members make a voluntary, usually lifelong, commitment to maintain certain precepts and standards of behavior; it is important to consider this commitment seriously before making it. Entering into monastic life style is to keep the vows with the determination for the rest of one's life. Living in vows is more powerful than living without them in religious pursuit. *Karunāpundarika sūtra* mentions that the *Bodhisattva* makes 500 vows to become *Samyak Sambuddha* including many specifications what he will do benefitting for the sake of various sorts of persons.<sup>564</sup> The novice will have a suitable teacher or guide or parents as well as a monastic community to support him in his monastic life.

Becoming a monastic is not just an individual decision. One can not just do what he wants when he becomes a monastic. To lead monastic life, one first needs to be

<sup>562</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 36

<sup>563</sup> *Ibid*, P. 33

<sup>564</sup> Silk, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 472), P. 24

stable in his practice, to have studied, have a good motivation and moral conduct and have a qualified teacher to guide him. Being a monastic is not just about him, when he is a monastic, he joins the *Saṅgha*, the *Buddhist* monastic community and he represents *Buddhist* tradition. As a member of the *Saṅgha*, he should dwell with other monastics and be willing to compromise his desires for the wellbeing of the community. As a *Saṅgha* member, he should also respect senior monastics and should be willing to take their advice and training under them in a mentor/pupil relationship in the matter of the *Dharma*.

As monastics no longer just see him as separate individual, his individuality is replaced by the symbols of the Triple Gem, the *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha*. In other words he becomes a part of Triple Gems. Because as a monastic he is distinct, it is his responsibility to uphold *Buddhism*. He should behave himself properly at all times. He should learn to keep the vows and spend maximum time in *Dharma* contemplation. It may be preferable for him to live in the monastery.

Being a monastic makes one different from other lay people. His vows and way of life change, as do his focus and habits. As a monastic he needs to be flexible and willing to receive training and change his old habits and patterns to conform with the *Dharma*. Of course there will always be those monastics, who after some years of living in community and receiving training prefer to go off for private practices on the condition of meeting occasionally on specified time but they are still part of the *Saṅgha* community. A monastic makes a daily schedule of practice, study, social work etc. and try to remain mindful of acts of body, speech and mind at all times. His words or instructions can have a profound effect on lay people, as he is regarded a man of principle. He should try to be worthy of the status he enjoys. He must spend time with other monastics and try to ask for teachings from his seniors/teacher/other well known teachers on *Dharma*. Living with like minded people who are keeping the same vows and have the same values is highly recommended. *Monasticism will never take off in the places where there is no strong monastic communities, and where monastics can not get essential traditional training. Buddhist Saṅgha and monasticism are complimentary to one-another.*

The above description of monastic life clearly shows that a career as a monastic is to keep an open mind and an open heart, to try to put *Dharma* into every moment of life. The life of a monastic is highly meaningful. Not only does he create



powerful good karma with all the study, service and meditation he does, as he is living in vows, guide others in *Dharma* practice. As a monastic he is following the lifestyle the *Buddha* himself chose. A simple and direct path to realizing the truth, the way things really are. That is why he is taken as symbol of the Triple Gem. Every moment of his life, he is reminded of what he most deeply value and he is an example to others (provided he properly embodies the *Dharma* and diligently engages in practice and study). It reminds that monastic life, living in vows is one of the most powerful ways to practice and attain liberation and benefit countless beings.

### 9.3 *Newār* monastic life style

When ordination (*pravajyā*) is given, it becomes recipient's life long commitment to be stuck to refuge in *Triratna*- the *Buddha*, the *Dharma* and the *Saṅgha* and promise to uphold five precepts.<sup>565</sup> *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* of Kathmandu are the only communities which had to be registered in royal register after having undergone initiation in Kathmandu. This act is still followed by visiting Hanumāndhokā by the newly initiates and offering betel nuts and pan to the royal throne at Nāsal chowk of Hanumāndhokā Durbār square. This must have been the commitment shown by them in front of the royal members in the past history. *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* are bound to their obligations even though they put aside monk's garb and return to householder's life. They are permitted to return to be householders but are vowed to abide by the precepts. They have sincerely followed this obligation.<sup>566</sup> It is more challenging for the *Newār* Monastics to comply with the *Dharma* as they live not in seclusion but in society or household. They have to keep their vows not by abstinence but by wise indulgence. It demands stronger intellect.<sup>567</sup> Those of weak intellect or practice, who have the proclivity for deviation find the path difficult. Through the initiations like *Dekhā*, *Newār* monastics become acquainted with high philosophy of *Vajrayāna* for such practice.<sup>568</sup>

---

<sup>565</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36 ), P. 136

<sup>566</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 45

<sup>567</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 38

<sup>568</sup> *Ibid*

Thus, privilege of undergoing *Pravajyā* ordination as a monk entangles one in a web of binding responsibilities.<sup>569</sup> Monastics have the vision to see that the world as governed by a condition of dependency: children are dependent upon parents; the individual upon the family; the family upon the caste; the caste upon the community; and so forth. They also see human life as involving inescapable relationships of dependency and of reciprocal obligations. *Newār* Monastics understand that to be human is to fulfill them. *Newār Buddhists*, therefore, undergo a unique series of ceremonies of consecrations and purification and follow a special series of ritual observances thereby gaining knowledge of a mystic and magical nature.<sup>570</sup>

*Newār Buddhists* have differing attitude towards the achievement of liberation. They do not demand that one abandon the social world for the attainment of deliverance. They reject ascetic renunciation, and become supra-human beings who have passed beyond the impotence and suffering of ordinary existence through the adoption of the opposite of renunciation, namely the celebration of earthly pleasures and through the sacrificial enjoyment of all that is normally rejected and condemned by celibate *Buddhist* monks.<sup>571</sup>

If celibate monks and *Newār Buddhist* monks are to be compared, though the goal is same for both, the monks attempt to attain it by disengaging himself from all that is human, social and physical and by suppressing and extinguishing all passions, emotion, and human attachments while the *Newār* monastics attempt to attain it by the ritual use of *tāntric* reversals through celebration of earthly pleasures. So, the monk's way is the rejection of the social world, its rules and conventions and so is personal and unstructured where as the *Newār* monastics reject the concept of ascetic renunciation as well as the exaltation of the unstructured and the liminal.<sup>572</sup> In other words, *Newār* style of monasticism stands in its unique form stressing upon its practice within the society being its invariable member as others.

*Newār Buddhist* Monastics need not follow all the *Vinaya* rules as mentioned in Indian *Theravāda* tradition (227 rules of male) or Tibetan tradition (253 rules).

---

<sup>569</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36 ), P. 133

<sup>570</sup> *Ibid*, P. 133-34

<sup>571</sup> *Ibid*, P. 134

<sup>572</sup> *Ibid*

They are not bound to follow them as they do not receive *Upasampadā*. They adhere to separate tradition of their own, following rules of *Daśa śikṣāpada* (Ten precepts) which are taught to them during *Pravajyā* (ordination) time along with some *Bodhisattva* vows which are in concomitant with their *Vajrayānic* ideals. The *Bodhisattva* vows are built into the structure of the *Gurumaṇḍalā* rite which is always followed by the *Newār* monastics while undertaking religious assignments.<sup>573</sup>

Relaxation from lengthy and hard to comply *Vinaya* rules seems innovative in itself demanded by then situation. They just take *Pravajyā* (ordination), the first step of monk initiation and refrain from adoption of second or last step, the *Upasampadā*. The system is comparable to *Sṛāmaṇera* initiation in *Theravāda* tradition. However, *Newār* monastics undergo other higher monastic initiations according to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* tradition. There is no doubt that they are equally serious, devoted and steadfast *Buddhist* practitioners, whose *Buddhist* sentiments are reflected by their entire religious lifestyle.

### 9.3.1 Duties of a *Śākyabhikṣu*

Monastic status begins with Monastic initiation in which *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* boys spend four days as monks.<sup>574</sup> After their first monastic initiation, they are called *Śākyabhikṣus*. There are stipulated activities or duties and restrictions of ordained boys after *Pravajyā* (*Bare chuyigu*) till their disrobement of monk's robes. The initiate is considered to be in a state of special sacredness during this period.<sup>575</sup> Such austerity is maintained again and again when they undertake major religious activities. During the period they observe the regulation of diet of the monk, avoid contact with anything unclean and keep the ten rules of disciple.

The *Śākyabhikṣu*, in the Nepalese style are required to observe some specific duties as follows:

- (i) For the four days, *Śākyabhikṣu* must wear monk's robe and other monkish attire/utensils and perform as full-fledged monk

<sup>573</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 128, 150-151

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid*, P. 58

<sup>575</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36 ), P. 137

- (ii) the *Śākyabhikṣu* must beg his food daily,
- (iii) Must live the life of a *Buddhist* monk though they continue to live at home.
- (iv) They have to observe the regulations of diet of the monk
- (v) Avoid profanity and contact with unclean (association with dogs and shoes), and
- (vi) Keep ten precepts.

The novice receives his first alms from his family members and then from relatives. During the tenure of his monkhood he had to visit the main shrine and pay *homage* to *Kwāpādya* (main deity) and make offerings There is saying that he at least visit seven house to beg alms..

On the fourth day the neophyte returns to the lay life. The boy then hands over the begging bowl and staff, and takes off his robes. Since the topknot is never maintained by *Śākyabhikṣus* even after disrobing ceremony as they are given the status of *Śākyabhikṣu*. Since then the avoidance of topknot is perhaps the insignia of a *Buddhist* monk or *Śākyabhikṣu*. Disrobing ceremony does not signify the abandonment of monastic vows but transition from *Bhikṣu* to *Bodhisattva* (*Sṛāvaka* to *Mahāyāna*) practice. They remain as householder *Bodhisattva* (*ādikarmic grihapati Bodhisattva*).

It is difficult to pinpoint the exact time as when the system of non-celibate monasticism appeared in Nepal. It is known that celibate monks existed till medieval period. Disappearance of celibate monks was not abrupt but was gradual as they were present though in few number till the time of Vanratna's stay in *Nepal-maṇḍala* (i.e. 15<sup>th</sup> century). Some historians assert their disappearance in 14<sup>th</sup> century after the fullest development of *Vajrayāna* which was formally consecrated in Nepal with the arrival of Atiśā in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>576</sup> However,

---

<sup>576</sup> D. R. Regmi, *Medieval Nepal*, Vol. I, (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2007 reprint), P. 547

mention has been already made in earlier chapter about presence of twenty five monasteries in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Patan where the celibate monks resided.

### 9.3.2 Duties of monastics after disrobement

It has already been mentioned above that in *Newār Buddhist* monastic tradition, the *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* do not cease to be *Bhikṣu* or *Buddhist* monks, even after disrobing ceremony of *Cūdākarma*, but they pass from the state of celibate *Bhikṣu* to that of householder monks (*grihasthi Bhikṣu*) or *ādikarmic Bodhisattva*. Therefore, the term *Śākyabhikṣu* also to refer to the *Mahāyāna* householder monks. It can be advocated from *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* viewpoint that being a householder is no less than being a monk and nun. It was a harder path; not only difficult ritual obligation but also lifelong family responsibilities to be fulfilled in addition.<sup>577</sup>

In disrobing ceremony the following lines are articulated about the status of *Bhikṣu*.

“You have gone through *Śrāvakyāna* and now come to *Mahāyāna*, the greatest of the *Buddhist Yānas*. You have participated in some *Vajrayāna* rituals and after going through some higher ordinations you will know what *Cakrasamvara* is”.

The popular text of *Ācārya Śāntideva*, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* had already indicated a provision for house-holder monkhood in *Buddhism*. The text has the following stanza.

*punara aparma kulaputra bhaviṣyanti anāgata  
adhavani grahstha pravajita ādikarmika Bodhisattva.*

The meaning of the text is as follows:

Again, oh, Sons of the family, there will be the householder beginner  
(Skt: *ādikarmika*) and ordained *Bodhisattvas* in the future.<sup>578</sup>

*Newār Buddhists* seemed to have been inspired by the text. Therefore, the monastic practice of *Newār Buddhists* is practice of *Ādikarma Bodhisattvas*. In other words, *Ādikarma Bodhisattva* are those who practice monasticism remaining as

<sup>577</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 53

<sup>578</sup> Min Bahadur Shakya, “Historical Analysis of Monasticism in *Newār Buddhism*”, *Voice of History*, Vol. XI, No.1, Kirtipur, 2000

householders within the society. It will be discussed later in following chapter. *Buddhist* scriptures like *Bodhisattvādimārgāvatāra-deśanā*, *Caryā Saṁgraha pradīpa* of Atiśā, *Kudristinirghātanam* (a part of *Advayavajra Saṁgraha*)<sup>579</sup>, *Ādikarmikapradīpa* of Ācārya Anupamvajra etc. of around eleventh century are prominent having elaborate details about *Ādikarma Bodhisattva*. This also proves that such practice of *Ādikarma Bodhisattva* was in vogue in India in medieval time and Nepal is the only place where it is still in practice. These texts had immense impact on Nepalese *Buddhism*. The monastics are required to fulfill their duties as *Ādikarmic Bodhisattva* even after disrobing.

### 9.3.3 Monastic activities under *Vajrayāna* framework

The *ādikarma bodhisattva* concept consists largely of the cultivation of the six perfections as known from the *Prajñāpāramitā*, by means of a daily practice known from the *tantras*, i.e., involving rituals employing *mantras*, *mudrās*, *maṇḍalās*, and so on. It clearly shows that monastics activities were in *Vajrayānic* framework. It involved blending of ideas and rituals stemming from mainstream *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*.<sup>580</sup> Advayavajra's *ādikarma* thus conforms easily to the *mantrayāna* form of *Buddhism* that was being taught in the educational-monastic institutions of late medieval India. Concerning *Ādikarmika Bodhisattva* Anupamavajra stands prominent. His work had a great influence on Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition. It is surprising and interesting to note that *Ādikarmikapradīpa* which was composed in 1098 A.D. by Anupamavajra had reflective impact on the daily practice of *Newār Buddhist* society even today. *Pravrajyā* prepares the novice for becoming *Ādikarmika Bodhisattva* providing necessary requisites. After disrobement following the *pravrajyā*, the monastics act as *Ādikarmika Bodhisattva* for rest of life with devotion to triple gems.

*Hevajra Tantra*, on the other hand, reveals the duties to be followed by *Vajrayānists* in teaching. As stated in *Hevajra*, first the eight precepts, then ten precepts should be taught, followed respectively by teaching *Vaibhāṣika*, *Sautrāntika*, *Yogācāra* and *Mādhyamika*, then only the way of *Mantra* be taught

<sup>579</sup> Mahāmahopādhyāya Haraprasad Shastri, *Advayavajrasaṁgraha*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. XL, (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1927)

<sup>580</sup> Glenn Wallis, "Advayavajra's instructions on the *ādikarma*" in *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, Fall 2003, P. 11

beginning with Hevajra.<sup>581</sup> Nepalese monastics seem influenced by the text like *Ugra paripṛcchā* which inspired them to undertake monastic initiation but to practice as a householder. The *Kriyā Samuccaya* (an old text) has a long discussion on how the *Śākya* or *Vajrācārya* should practice the path to *nirvāṇa*. Its conclusion, heavily supported with *tantric* scriptural references is that in order to receive initiation the practitioner (the *tantric* initiate) should (i) have started as a monk but (ii) not be merely monk i.e. should have left that stage behind abandoning monk's garb and shaven head.

#### 9.4 Monastic Functions

There can be several deeds or activities to be performed by the ordained persons. However, two of them, teaching (*deśanā*-including preaching) and meditation (*bhāvanā*), are more typical for them.<sup>582</sup> The centre of monastic activities is the monastery (*viḥār*). The other major shrines and deities which are to be tended or served are as mentioned in the text, *Svayambhū purāṇa*.<sup>583</sup> As the *Newār Buddhist* monasticism is basically based on rituals, the ritualistic activities are carried out as mentioned on various local texts known as *Pārājikā* texts like *Tārā Pārājikā*, *Manjuśrī Pārājikā*, *Vajrasattva Pārājikā*, *Lokeśvara Pārājikā*, *Patita Pārājikā*, *Buddhaktosansaramaya* etc. Usually these *Pārājikā* texts deal in quelling the bad situation which are supposed to happen in lieu of omen signal received. The monastics perform their ritualistic activities mostly according to the texts, *Kriyā samuccaya*<sup>584</sup> and *Kriyā Saṃgraha*.<sup>585</sup> Other ritual texts seem to have been based on these two basic texts. *Newār Buddhists* seek protection from danger either from *Karuṇāmaya* or *Tārā*. Therefore, hymn recitation of these deities is popular. There is also common practice of *Navagrantha pūjā*, *Sāadhanā pāṭha* and Mnemonic prolix *Dhāraṇīs*.<sup>586</sup> Major functions of the monastics are still concomitant to the details mentioned in the texts like *Bodhisattvādimārgāvatāra-*

<sup>581</sup> Hevajra tantra quotation, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 172)

<sup>582</sup> Richard F. Gombrich, *Buddhist Precept and Practice*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Reprint 2008), P. 314

<sup>583</sup> *Svayambhū purāṇa* mentions about many religious shrines including *Tīrtha* and *Upatīrtha* (river confluences), seats of *bodhisattvas* etc. which are considered holy sites.

<sup>584</sup> *Kriyā samuccaya* by Jagdarpanacārya

<sup>585</sup> *Kriyāsaṃgraha* by Kuladutta

<sup>586</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 127

*deśanā* of Atīśā, *Kudristinirghātanam* (a part of *Advayavajra Saṁgraha*) of Advayavajra, or *Ādikarmikapradīpa* of Ācārya Anupamvajra etc.

The principal life cycle events, described as *Jana-jivan-kriyā-paddhati*<sup>587</sup>, from birth to death are treated as passage de rites and are compulsorily performed in *Buddhist* way. There are ten major rites including *Buddhist* ordination involving a lot of rituals. These ten rites popularly known as *Daśakarma* or *Daśakarma Saṁskāra*, are commonly followed by the *Newār Buddhists*.<sup>588</sup> Every individual must undergo through such rites and rituals, failing which is taken as denigrating the *Buddhist* status. There are other subsidiary or subordinate rites called *Upakarma* or *upasaṁskāra*. These include rites done for aged persons, after death rites etc. In every life cycle ritual, *Guru maṇḍalā* rite is performed.<sup>589</sup> As *Daśakarma Saṁskāra* and *upasaṁskār* are performed by the monastics for the Buddhists, they became the part of monastic functions. Details on *Daśakarma* rites are given on the following chapter.

Daily, monthly or regular, and annual functions and rituals form an integral part of monastic life in Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. The duties of elders are to oversee smooth running of the daily, monthly, and annual *Buddhist* functions and festivals. They also organize initiation rite for the neophytes into *Bhikṣu Saṅgha* (i.e. performance of *Cūdākarma*, *Ācālyegu* ceremony of initiated members' offsprings) as well as regulating the discipline of the *Saṅgha* and social rules. Since almost every important occasion in the life of the average Nepalese is invested with religious significance, monks visit households as well to perform rites related to diverse events such as birth, marriage, sickness, death, construction of houses, promotion of senior Government officials, inaugural or opening ceremonies of any occasion and other day-today functions.

Recitation of scriptures is usually followed in almost every occasions. Popular forms for recitation are *stotra* or *tutah* (eulogistic verses), *dhāraṇīs*, *sūtras* of any kinds like discourse type or protective type. Though practice of recitation of Holy

<sup>587</sup> Badriratna, Ratnakaji Bajracharya, *Nepal Jana-Jivan Kriyā Paddhati (Action Manual for Life-style in Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Badriratna, Ratnakaji Bajracharya). There are many old and new texts written on the subject. The current one published in 2010 is '*The Daśakarma Vidhi*' written by Pandit Vaidya Asha Kaji and edited by Michael Allen.

<sup>588</sup> For details, please see "Life cycle rites/sacraments" in Chapter XI 'Sangha- the functional unit'

<sup>589</sup> Gellner, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 204



Scriptures may be done on daily basis, it is mostly observed as regular functions. The recitation of *Nāmasangiti*, *Pañcarakṣyā*, *Dānagāthā*, *Aparimitā Dhāraṇī*, *Saptavidhānottara Pūjā Stotra*, *Daśapāramitā Stotra*, and *Buddha trailokya Stortras* are the most prominent ones. Besides, the recitation of *Aṣṭasāhāsrīkā Prajñāpāramitā*, and *Nava Sūtra* are also carried out on special occasions. Thus, recitation rituals became integral to the devotional lives of *Newār Buddhists*.

Another function mostly exhibited by the monastics is public story telling on most of the functions. Stories are mostly taken from *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* having moral lessons. A specified function may have specific story to be told. The same story is repeatedly told again and again at a typical function whenever it is observed. This has helped in memorizing the ethical lessons contained in the stories. Therefore, such stories are taken equivalent to *vinaya* which has been skillfully used by the *Mahāyānists*. It seems *Newār* monastics are very much influenced by the text *Śikṣā samuccaya* of *Ācārya Śāntideva* which advises *Buddhist* masters not to keep themselves aloof from society but to carry on the activity of public discourse preaching and provide several important instructions for them. Public discourse preaching is regarded one of the activities of a bodhisattva benefitting others and so is highly praised.<sup>590</sup>

#### 9.4.1 Daily functions

*Newār* monastic follow *Ādikarmic Bodhisattva* path as specified by Atiśā (982-1054) in his treatise *Bodhisattvādimārgāvatāra-deśanā*<sup>591</sup> written in prose form. An *ādikarmic Bodhisattva* should inactivate *bodhicitta* and undertake *śikṣāpadas* of three *ādiśīla* propounded by the *Buddha*. He should get up early in the morning in 5<sup>th</sup> *prahara*, attends nature's call, takes bath as per the availability of the local facilities. He should contemplate on awakening *bodhicitta* towards benefitting all sentient beings in suffering, should worship *Buddha* image kept in front of him bowing with bent knees, saluting with folded hands to all the *Mahāyānic Saṅghas* in view of venerating triple gems of all directions. He should confess sins or wrong doing (*Pāpadeśanā*), and also rejoice meritorious deeds (*punyānumodana*) on

<sup>590</sup> *Dharmabhāṇakādi-rakṣāparichcheda* of *Śikṣā samuccaya*, P.L. Vaidya(Ed.), *Śikṣā samuccaya of Śāntideva*, Buddhist Sanskrit Texts-No. 11, (Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute, 1961), Pp. 29-36

<sup>591</sup> Ramesh Chandra Negi (Tr. & Ed and restored), *Atiśāviracita Akādaśa-grantha*, (Varanasi: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1992), Pp. 120-122

behalf of own and others. He prays the *Buddhas* to make *Dharma* discourse. Requests enlightened beings not to pass away and leave the *saṃsāra*. In this way, for actualization of all the wholesome bases, he should carry on seven fold worship (*saptavidhānuttara- pūjā*). Targeting at benefitting those in suffering, he should recite refuge hymn (*tri-śaraṇa-gamaṇapada*) thrice to triple gems. Then he contemplates readying this whole body at the service of all sentient beings. Pray to remain devoted to *saddharma*. He then continues his practice of *Samathā* and *vipassana* meditation sitting in suitable posture. Then with eyes open should feel illusory nature of all external objects. As a common daily work, he with compassionate mind should recite any *Mahāyāna sūtra* wishing benefits of all visible and invisible *sattvas* (sentient beings). Even at the time of taking meal, he should not forget to contemplate on falsity of the physical body engaging in investigation of *Dharmakāya*, while knowing quantity of the food of meal. It is also advised that he should offer some portion of food to triple gems, disabled, animals or birds. No fault befall upon him when he follows these instructions as daily routine.

Advayavajra (1007-1085 A.D) has given details of activities to be performed by an *ādikarma Bodhisattva* in his *Kuḍṛiṣṭinirghātanam*. Strikingly current *Newār* practice corresponding to daily practice of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*, is as per instructions mentioned in Advayavajra's *Bodhisattva (grhapati Bodhisattva)* in the *Kuḍṛiṣṭinirghātana* (Refutation of wrong views) compiled in *Advayavajra Saṃgraha*, a work belonging to 11<sup>th</sup> century. With the following prescriptive section of the *Kuḍṛiṣṭinirghātana*, Advayavajra provides us with a picture of daily practice in medieval period.<sup>592</sup> As with all such manuals, the presentation is, of course, of an envisioned and ideal practice. Though activities vary somewhat from community to community, they generally involve such exercises as *mantra* recitation (*japa*), daily ablutions (*snāna*), oblations (*homa*), meditation (*dhyāna*), devotional worship of *Buddhas* and *Bodhisattvas* (*pūjā*), *mandala* offerings, and occasional alms begging (*bhikṣā*).<sup>593</sup> These are carried out under a vow (*vrata*), during an extended period of training. *Kuḍṛiṣṭinirghātanam* chapter<sup>594</sup> of *Advayavajrasaṃgraha* mentions following tentative daily functions of monastics.<sup>595</sup>

<sup>592</sup> Wallis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 580), P.20

<sup>593</sup> *Ibid*, P. 8

<sup>594</sup> Shastri, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 579)

<sup>595</sup> Wallis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 580), Pp. 20-33

The householder *Bodhisattva*, together with taking refuge in the three jewels, and vows to abide by five precepts (*Pañcaśīla*)<sup>596</sup> avoiding *Daśa akuśala* (ten non virtuous acts) while practicing virtuous actions, does the following daily activities.

- (i) He rises early in the morning. After washing his face with clean water, he recalls the three jewels. By reciting *om āh hum*, he binds protection to himself. He should then engage in such things as (reciting verses of) praise, recitation of *mantras*, meditation, and study. He should also recite the *Nāmasaṅgiti* three times a day.
- (ii) After this, he quietly intones *om jambhalajalendraya svāha* and must then offer to *Jambhala* handfuls of water. Then, offers food and water offerings, with mantra recitation to *Tathāgatas*. Leaving a triple portion in the vestibule for *pretas* and *picāśas*, he makes a food offering to the *Bodhisattvas*.
- (iii) Now, he contemplates on *catu brahmavihāra*- practicing loving kindness (*māitri*) toward all people, the kind of love that one feels toward an only son; compassion (*karuṇā*) that has the nature of a longing to remove (all people) from the ocean of *saṃsāra*; joy, which is the majesty of the mind bursting forth from going to refuge in the triple jewels; and equanimity, which is the quality of being completely unattached.
- (iv) He establishes a sacred consecrated circle on a section of the ground. He invokes with mantra the *Buddhas*, one of the triple gems, in the form of *pañca tathāgatas* and offer *pūjā*. The prescription for worshipping the *maṇḍala* is provided. Practice of activating awakened mind (*Bodhicitta*) is done through seven fold mental worship (*Saptavidhānuttara pūjā*). He should then worship Mañjusri, and so forth, as has been taught. He should be one who fulfills the six perfections, empowered by those such as the *Buddha*. He who creates the *maṇḍalā* is endowed with infinite virtues.

---

<sup>596</sup> abstains from the five acts- abusing sentient beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, false speech, which is by nature blameworthy, and drinking intoxicants.

- (v) After reciting the *Buddhist* text like *Prajñāpāramitā*, he should perform worship according to the prescriptions for the entire *maṇḍala*, etc., continually plunging deeply into its meaning or that of the six-faced *Bhadracary*, (he should worship) three times of day. Possessing unbroken absorption, fully concentrated, he should recite as long as he desires. He should perform worship to a statue, book, or painting, etc., of the *Buddhas* and *Bodhisattvas*.
- (vi) Homage to *pañca-Buddha* is again paid twenty-one times, he should create a *caitya* of earth or sand. The *caityas* are consecrated with the recitation of the verse ‘*ye dharma hetu...*’ he should worship the *caitya* by employing the *dhāraṇī*: *om namo bhagavate ratnaketurājāya tathāgatāyārhatē samyaksambuddhāya*, and *om ratne ratne mahāratne ratnavijaye svāha*. By worshipping a single *caitya* with this *dhāraṇī*, tens millions of *caityas* are thereby worshipped.
- (vii) He seeks transference of merit accrued oneself to all, and rejoicing merit earned by others without any personal pride. He contemplates—just as the *tathāgatas*, the worthy ones, the perfectly awakened ones, consent, he transfer without personal pride the root of good in unsurpassed, perfect awakening; just so, he cause this transference. By means of this virtuous action, may he quickly become awakened in the world.
- (viii) He aspires –“May I teach the *Dharma* for the welfare of the world and May I liberate all beings, oppressed by so much suffering.”
- (ix) One should offer the *bali*, the *naivedya*, the *hariti* offering, the *agra* of rice. After having sipped water, he should recite this three times for the happiness and welfare of all beings, who are endowed with supreme happiness and completely purified intelligence:

Afterwards, he should spend as much time as he desires doing exercises that purify his body, speech, and mind. As soon as he settles down (in the evening), he should spend time, day after day, together with companions or fellow practitioners to

discuss (episodes, etc.) from the *Jātaka*, *Nidāna*, and *Avadāna*. Thus, at evening's twilight, he should perform meditation, *mantra* recitation, and hymns of praise, etc., with an unwearied mind, just as taught. He who has offered the oblation, should sleep in a meditation sleep reciting a *mantra* beginning with the syllable 'a'.

Similarly, *Ādikarmapradīpa* of Anupamvajra reveals the following prescribed daily practices of *Newār Buddhists*.

- (i) Taking Refuge in Triple Gems
- (ii) Reciting *Nāmasaṅgīti*
- (iii) To recite *Bhadracārya Prāṇidhāna*
- (iv) To offer *Pretabali*
- (v) To circumambulate *Caitya*, *Buddha* statues etc.
- (vi) To perform *Guru-maṇḍalā* rite
- (vii) To meditate on tutelary deity
- (viii) To recite *Prajñāpāramitā* and other *Mahāyāna Sūtras*
- (ix) To recite *dānagāthā* (stanzas of giving)
- (x) To perform *Bodhisattva* practices joyfully
- (xi) To study *Buddhist* scriptures
- (xii) Offering food to Triple Gems and tutelary deity before eating
- (xiii) Offer fivefold prostration to *Buddha* of ten directions
- (xiv) Sleeping in a lion's posture after meditating on *Deity Yoga*

The daily functions to be carried out by monastics being *Ādikarmic Bodhisattva*, mentioned in the above three texts are more or less similar. Most of these are still followed fully or partially by *Newār Buddhists* even today. Some other daily rules to be followed are also mentioned in *Tārāpārājikā* and *Manjuśrī pārājikā*.<sup>597</sup>

#### 9.4.1.1 Daily Functions at the monastery (generalized)

Most monastics wake with the dawn and spend hours doing their personal perfunctory meditations. Then they attend to their personal hygiene. In the majority of monasteries there is then a communal one hour *pūjā* at about 6 A.M for an hour followed by breakfast. Then the monastics may do some chores for the monastery such as cleaning the shrine of the monastery. The *Buddhists* at the monasteries of

<sup>597</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 127

the Kathmandu valley have also a daily *Pūjā* dedicated to the main image, (the *Kwāpādya*) enshrined in the monastery. The turn-holders of the shrine tend to serve the *kwāpādya* (main deity, usually the *Buddha*) and deities enshrined in the *āgaṃ* (the esoteric chamber of the monastery). Usually, the monasteries of *Nepal-maṇḍala* are tended with religious performances by *Saṅgha* members turn by turn on seniority basis. The turn term may repeat in accordance with the size of the *Saṅgha* in respect to its members. *Kwāpādyao* is usually worshiped thrice a day- in the morning, afternoon, and evening. During worship bell, *chāmar*, *Dharmagandi*- a kind of wooden pole used as bell are utilized. Beating *Dharmagandi* is for informing all that a round of worship is undergoing. Upon hearing it, the *saṅgha* members recite a popular *Buddhist* hymn, *Buddhaṃ trailokyanāth*. At the *kwāpādyo* shrine, *Buddhist* hymn, *Dāna balena* is recited following the morning worship.

At one time the monasteries of Kathmandu Valley had a complete schedule of rituals for the whole day. This is no longer in practice except at a few monasteries like *Kanak Caitya Mahāvihār (Jana bāhā)*, *Te bāhā* in Kathmandu and *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra (Kwā bāhā)*, *Rudravarṇa Mahāvihār (Oku Bāhā)* in Patan. Among these practices the recitation of *Nāmasangiti*, *Dānagātha*, *Aparimitā Dhāraṇī*, *Saptavidhānottara Pūjā Stotra*, *Daśapāramitā Stotra*, and *Buddha trailokya Stotras* are the most prominent ones. Besides, the recitation of *Aṣṭasahasrikā Prajñāpārāmita*, *Pañcarakṣyā* and *Nava Sūtra* are also recited on special days.

Before morning tea (nowadays breakfast), every adult monastic perform *nhikam* (combination ritualistic performance and meditation). After breakfast and chores another period of meditation or study of 2 or 3 hours is followed before lunch. One of the daily functions of the monastic is the temple visit or shrine visit. They mostly go to *Svayambhū* in the morning or they also prefer visiting nearby temples like *Karuṇāmaya* temples (at *Jana bāhā* of Kathmandu, *Ta: bāhā* of Lalitpur and *Ādināth Lokeśwara* at Chovār) or temples of four *Karuṇāmaya*, temples of four *yogini* (mainly at *Vijeśworī*) etc. Time factor is not so important as some may prefer visiting temple before or after morning tea. Such temple visit may be considered as morning walk of this modern age while they also enjoy *bhajan* or religious observances performed at the shrines. The monastics mostly recite *Aparmitā dhāraṇī*, *Tārā dhāraṇī*, *Nāmasangiti* in the morning time before having

meal. The monastics are supposed to eat before noon and that should be their last meal but this rule is seldom followed these-days for several reasons. After lunch there is a rest period followed by more meditation sessions or study. After noon most of the monastics set out for meeting their parishioners (*Jajamāns*) attending their call and are busy in conduction of various ritualistic processes. The rest of the evening is usually spent in meditation. In most of the cases, all the morning religious chores is condensed in the performance of *nhikam*. Every *Newār Buddhists* perform *nhikam* with meditation worshipping triple gems wishing welfare of all sentient beings. *Nhikam* of ordained persons is longer than that of ordinary ones as it involves elaborate performance of *Guru-maṇḍalā*.<sup>598</sup> Status of the *Guru* is supreme equivalent to the *Buddha*. So, *Guru* means the teacher or the *Buddha*. In earlier *Buddhism* and now *Theravāda* tradition, refuge to Triple gem is taken before beginning any religious action. In the same way, in Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition, *Guru-maṇḍalā* is performed before undertaking any religious action. Refuge to triple gems is also included in *Guru-maṇḍalā* along with other ritualistic process and meditation. The *Bodhisattva* vows are built into the structure of the *Guru maṇḍala* rite but most lay people do not know this.<sup>599</sup>

Furthermore, the monastics who have received higher *vajrayānic* initiation (*Dekhā*) have to observe daily more elaborate *nhikam* which involve preparation and worship of various *maṇḍalās*.<sup>600</sup> In the evening, monastics might gather again for a cup of tea and some community time together, some monastics catch up on study. Senior monastics may make time to teach/guide/instruct younger monastics at this time. The monastics prefer performing recitation of *Dhāraṇīs* like *Bajrasattvadhāraṇī*, *Bhadracarī* in the evening time. They would not give up unless they recite the famous universal Buddhist stanza ‘*ye dharmā hetu prabhāvā...*’.

If monastics live in house away from the monastery they may take time, especially on weekends to talk with and counsel the many lay devotees that come to visit the monastery and do their own retreat or to receive teachings. A considerable amount of a monastics’ time is spent in discussion of the *Dharma* and offering teachings.

---

<sup>598</sup> Naresh Man Bajracharya, *Vajrayāna Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Triratna Prakashan, 2069 B.S), Pp. 88-91

<sup>599</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 128

<sup>600</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 598)

Above description apply to those *Buddhists* only who professionally follow the *Buddhist* practices or monasticism. In the modern period of nowadays, most of the monastics (*Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*) are engaged to their job or business, mostly they spend the office hours (i.e. 10 AM to 5 PM) in earning their livelihood. They could devote only the remaining time for the practice of *Dharma*. However, they would not decline from their duty of rendering service to monastery and *Saṅgha* when they have their turn to do so. The turn comes on the seniority basis from time to time rotationally. Besides, they have some obligatory duties to be fulfilled. Every ordained monastics has to perform *nhikam* in the morning before taking morning meal or breakfast. Importance of *nhikam* is so much so that if the monastic misses out to perform it, next day he should beg apology and continue. The monastic gets instructions with vision and *mantra* on how to perform *nhikam*. He has to participate compulsorily in the functions like *Saṅghabhojan*, *pañcadān*, *samyakdān*, group hymn recitation etc. when he is invited to attend. Furthermore, he is also entitled to participate in other religious jobs assigned by the *Saṅgha* or the *gūṭhī*, failing which incur a penalty upon him. It is his duty to fulfill such obligatory jobs.

#### 9.4.2 Regular functions

Some regular functions are carried out in fixed intervals of time period on fortnightly, monthly or six monthly basis. Such functions are performed mostly on *Pāro* (new moon day), *Astāmi*, *Caturdaśī* or *charhe* (fourteenth day), *Pūrṇi* (Full moon day) of brighter half month and *khaṣṭami* (6<sup>th</sup> day), *Aṣṭami*, *Triyodashi* (13<sup>th</sup> day), *Caturdaśī* (14<sup>th</sup> day), *Aunsi* (no moon day), *Daśami* (10<sup>th</sup> day) of darker half month according to *Saṅskrit* lunar calendar. It is believed that on such days, the deities make visit to the place or the monastery and merit earned on these days multiplies 1000 folds. On *Pūrṇimā* day, *Śākyamuni Buddha* and 16 *arhats* are remembered and worshipped. *Vasundharā* is worshiped on *Tritiyā* day while *Pañcami* is known for *Manjusrī*. On 9<sup>th</sup> day of brighter half (*Navami*, *Śukla pakṣe*), *Caturthi* (4<sup>th</sup> day) and *Caturdaśī* (14<sup>th</sup> day) of darker half month (*Kriṣṇa pakṣe*) shrines of guardian deities like *Mahānkāl*, *Sankatā* etc. are visited and worshipped.

Among the various regular functions, the most remarkable ones are *Aṣṭami puja*, *Aunsi Pūjā* and *Diśi Pūjā* (*Daśami Pūjā*). *Aṣṭami* is the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the lunar month.



Mostly on this day, *Aṣṭami vrata* and *pūjā* are arranged in the honour of *Amoghapāssa Lokeśwara* or *Avlokiteśwara*. *Aunsi Pūjā* takes place on *Aunsi* (no moon day). Similarly, *Diśi Pūjā* done on the *Daśami*, 10<sup>th</sup> day of darker half (*Kriṣṇa Pakṣe*) of the lunar month which is dedicated to honour of *Yoginis*. Previously, there used to be *Daśami pūjā* on every *Daśami*. But these-days, it is performed twice a year, one called *Nakwā-diśi* or *Tallā diśi* in summer (observed on *Aṣād Kriṣṇa Daśami*, 10<sup>th</sup> of Darker half of the month *Aṣād*) and another, *Mālakhwā-diśi* or *Chikulā-diśi* in winter time (on 10<sup>th</sup> of Darker half of the month *Mansir*). *Aunsi Pūjā* and *Diśi Pūjā* are esoteric ritual carried out at the *āgam* of the monastery.

Likewise, on every 14<sup>th</sup> day of darker half of the month, *carhe* (*Caturdaśī*) event with worship is observed. There are 12 *carhe* in a year as – *Mātati carhe* (*Vaiśākh* month), *Sithi carhe* (*Jeṣṭha* month), *Dilla carhe* (*Aśad*), *Gathamuga carhe* (*Śrāvan*), *Juga carhe* (*Bhadra*), *Nalasvane carhe* (*Aświn*), *Swanti carhe* (*Kārtik*), *Bālā carhe* (*Mansir*), *Diśi carhe* (*Poush*), *Lain carhe* (*Māgh*), *Śilā carhe* (*Falgun*) and *Pānha carhe* (*Caitra*). It is believed that on *carhe* days and *aunsi* (no moon day) evil forces or inhuman elements become active and these *carhe* performance is targeted to quell their effect. On these days, they are offered ritualistically their share called *bali* or *bau* which are thrown at crossroads.

To keep familiarity with narratives and their public recitation eventually became a recognized as a regular monastic avocation within a *Saṅgha* that include folklorists. Public story telling was a common practice in *Newār Buddhism*, which attract laity to the *Dharma*. These stories also served themes for creation of early *Buddhist* art. Such practice of story telling which draws mostly from *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* is intensified at the time of *Buddhist* auspicious month ‘*Gūnlā*’. Artistic depiction made preaching to the laity simple and thus literature was directed more toward householders.

#### 9.4.2.1 *Vrata*- the ritual fasting

Another regular monastic function is observance of *Vrata*- the ritual fasting or spiritual vow, locally known as *Dhalan*. This function is aimed at laity bringing them to monastic experience. As a form of *Buddhist* spiritual practices, the *Vratas* are mostly performed in honor of *Buddhas* and *Bodhisattvas*, with special rules and

regulations on food habits. *Vratas* are monastics led and lay sponsored worship programs lasting one or more days. So, Connection between the monastics and laity is established through the activities like *vrata*. Interdependence between the monastics and the lay community can be witnessed through the *vratas* in Nepalese setting.

In Kathmandu Valley, there are many power places (important religious sites) where these *Vratas* are performed. They are as follows: *Svayambhū*, shrines of *Karuṇāmaya* like *Cho Bāhā*, Bungamati, *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*, Twelve *Tīrthas*, Eight *Vitarāgas* and others. As the religious observance for laity, there are various *vrata* like *Aṣṭamivrata*, *Vasundharāvrata* (*Gatilā Vrata*), *Lakha Caitya vrata* (*Lucidyah thāyegu*), *Tārā pūjā*, or *Satva pūjā*, *Caturdaśī vrata* etc.<sup>601</sup> Others among many *Vratas* are *Dharmadhātu Vrata*, *Vajradhātu vrata*, *Amoghpaś vrata*, *Māsopavāsa vrata*, *Pañca vrata*, *Manjuṣrī Vrata*, *Pañcarakṣā Vrata*, *Surya Vrata*, *Mahānkāl vrata* etc.<sup>602</sup>

Among above mentioned *vratas*, *Māsopavāsa* is unique. As the name indicates, it runs for the whole month, usually the month of *Gunlā*. It is mostly observed for religious justice by hard hit married women at the shrines of *Lokeśvaras-Karuṇāmaya*'s temple of Bungamati, *Anandādi Lokeśvara*'s site of *Co Bāhā*, *Kīrtipur*, and *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Lalitpur. It is observed for seven days of a month long annual festival which begins on *Kārtik Pūrṇimā* (full moon day of month *Kārtik*, September). Husbands of those women in *Māsopavāsa* observance should come to receive them. If a husband fails to receive his wife at the *vrata* site, divorce is legally ensured between the couple, and this verdict is socially accepted.<sup>603</sup> Thus this *vrata* has social importance in addition to religious one. During late medieval period, the devotees keeping the observance of this *vrata* were so many in number that the state promulgated rules regarding the *vrata* through an inscription.<sup>604</sup> It is known from the inscription that there were thirty advising personnels deputed for providing instructions regarding the *vrata* in

<sup>601</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 224

<sup>602</sup> Badri Ratna Bajracharya, *Buddhisim of Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, 1986), P. 45

<sup>603</sup> (i) Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 331)

(ii) Vaidya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 150), Pp. 134-135

<sup>604</sup> For details, please see: Bajracharya, *Madhyakālā Abhilekh*, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), Pp. 191-194

Bungamati only. It indicates popularity of *Buddhist* observances and their importance.

The monastics perform public oriented religious observance like *Vrata* (a short asceticism) for smooth running of the tradition. *Newār vrata* practice consists of the rituals entailing doctrinal assertions and a long segment in which the attendants hear stories (*vrata-kathā*) related to the origins, practices and boons associated with the rituals; the *vrata* also involves modest fasting, assembling offerings, chanting holy words declaring faith and taking refuge and participating in choreographed rituals that are common in the local tradition. They tell concerned *Jātaka* or *Avadāna* stories with moral teachings. Every *vrata* has at least a specific such story telling function and appropriate place for its observance. During the stories or explanation, read out at such observances the participants are exhorted to avoid the ten unwholesome actions.<sup>605</sup> *Newār Buddhists* do not in fact take precepts regularly, unless they are devotees of the *Theravāda* movement or participate in observances organized by the monks of the *Tibetan* tradition. Nonetheless, in a ritualized fashion, the content and sometimes the actual wording, of the precepts, five, eight and ten, are incorporated into the practice of observances like *vrata* and monastic Initiation. Precepts are simply built into the rites which can be categorized into two types-complex worship (*Pūjāvidhi*) and Observance (*vrata*). Thus, *Buddhist* observances in *Newār Buddhism* are ritualization of the eight precepts and are directed at different deities.<sup>606</sup> In general, the aim of the *Vrata/Upoṣadha* is to take precepts to abstain from ten non-virtuous actions of body, speech and mind. To perform ten virtuous actions is the main object of the *Vrata*.

The old tradition of keeping *vratas* by *Newār Buddhists* has created one of the main religious constituencies within *Newār Buddhist* community, uniting families and friends who regularly perform rites to a chosen deity. *Newār Buddhist* practices have become highly communal through *vratas* which are not caste exclusive but have shifting memberships and are relatively ephemeral.<sup>607</sup>

These *vrata* observances maintain mobilization of the *Buddhist* laity which is very important to keep the continuity of a tradition. Gellner draws example for this from

---

<sup>605</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 221

<sup>606</sup> *Ibid*, P. 225

<sup>607</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), P.115

an article of P.S Jaini (1980) comparing *Buddhism* and *Jainism* which asks the question why *Buddhism* died out in its land of origin but *Jainism* survived.<sup>608</sup> It is concluded that one of the crucial factors was the relative absence in *Buddhism* of specifically *Buddhist* observances for the laity to perform. One of the earliest *Buddhist* scriptures ridicules the *Jaina* laity for becoming a monk for a day and to this day *Theravāda Buddhism* lacks the observances which are present both in *Jainism* and *Mahāyāna*.<sup>609</sup>

One of the popular *vratas* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* is *Tārā Vrata* showing devotion to celestial female bodhisattva-the *Tārā*. The *Tārāvrata kathā* has sanctified *Tārā Tīrtha*<sup>610</sup> at Bagduwāl of Kathmandu valley. *Tārā* cult is so popular in Kathmandu that it brought about a popular *Newār* greeting style ‘*Tāremām*’ (short form of *Tārā Saranam* meaning ‘I take refuge in *Tārā*’). The view is borrowed from Gellner.<sup>611</sup> *Tārā vrata* is observed for good health, and longevity.

On *Caturdaśī* day *Vrata* related to the powerful deity *Mahākāla* is observed with its story and ritual practice. As mentioned, *Mahākāla* is the king of *yakṣas*, the subduer of *Māra* (demonic tempter of *Buddhas* and *Buddhist* aspirants) and the servant of gods, the demons and humans; it is regarded as an effective ally in vanquishing enemies and is regarded as guardian deity who deserves veneration and invocation. *Mahākāla* is found mostly enshrined opposite *Ganeśa*, the elephant headed deity in the entrance ways of most *Newār Vihāras* on the right side of the door, the position to be as indicated in the text *Kriyāsamuccaya*; as it is regarded as protector deity, it is also found inside the exterior niches of private home. The short story about how this deity comes to protect the *Dharma* as well as individual *Buddhists* is often told on the occasion of *Caturdaśī vrata*. The story is also related to establishment of free standing two storied *Mahākāla* temple at Tundikhel, associated with the *Newār* myth of “first contact” with this deity by a local *Vajrācārya* adept named Sāsvatvajra of *Mantrasiddhi Mahāvihāra*, the present *Saval Bāhā*. Therefore, several kinds of *vrata* are in practice as regular *Buddhist* practices involving laity and the monastics.

---

<sup>608</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 220

<sup>609</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>610</sup> *Tīrtha* is a religiously important place which has turned into pilgrimage point.

<sup>611</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 93

### 9.4.3 Annual functions

Annual functions are carried out every year in annual basis. These are the special eventful days celebrated with several *Buddhist* programs like *Upoṣatha vrata* (fasting), *Buddha pūjā*, Recitation of *Buddhist* scriptures, *Dharma* discourse, and so forth.

#### 9.4.3.1 *Gūnlā*

During the monsoon period (traditionally in the month of Bhadra i.e August) the monastics do a month long retreat, which is popular as the festival of *Gūnlā*. It was also called *Guṇilā*.<sup>612</sup> This is comparable to three month rain retreat- *varsāvāssa* which must have remained as *Gūnlā* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. A lot of religious activities are intensively carried out in the monasteries by the *Buddhists*. Worship of *Buddhist* deities, recitation of holy *Buddhist* scriptures, construction of miniature votive *caityas* in large number, displaying *Buddhist* articles possessed by the monastery, story-telling of *jātaka* and *avadāna*, observance of *dāna* are some of the important events observed during *Gūnlā*. The *Buddha* is believed to have said that such period of contemplation was essential for one's spiritual progress as a monastic and for community building. *Pañca-dāna* is one of the special annual function during *Gūnlā* time. On this day the ordained monastics visit house to house begging alms. The devotees offer alms of different articles including money to the monastics (*Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*). The principal institutional practice for giving of gifts to the monastic community is the festival of *Pañcadān* which is based upon inspiring stories of *Vesantara* under *Vesantara Jātaka* etc.,. *Pañcadān* also provides the testimony that *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* monks who act as the recipients of alms. It is prerogative of only *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* to receive alms from the public laymen during *Pañcadān* and *Samyak* festivals which are known as the cult of *Dīpaṅkara*. The cult based on *Kapisāvadāna Buddhist* story has the key role of one of the past *Buddha* known by the name *Dīpaṅkara*.<sup>613</sup> Therefore, *Gūnlā* is the month of intensive *Buddhist* activities displayed by the monastics and laity.

<sup>612</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 379

<sup>613</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 184-85

#### 9.4.3.2 Participation in Annual council of Ecclesiastical affairs

At least once in a year, all the monastics has to participate in their respective assemblies. *Vajrācāryas* have two types of assemblies- *Pui ācā gu* on regional basis and *de ācā gu* on national basis as in Kathmandu, in addition to their annual gathering at their own monastery where they belong. In Patan and Bhaktapur, they have annual gathering at their monastery when all the *Saṅgha* members including both *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* meet and separate gathering of *Vajrācārya* called *ācāgu*. That means they have to observe at least two such meetings. Such annual council of the *Saṅgha* members of the monastery can be construed as convocation or valediction ceremony since the new *Saṅgha* members who received first ordination (*pravajyā*) and took *Saṅgha* membership are introduced under a ritualistic process followed by a *Saṅgha bhojan*, communal meal. Besides, during assembly gathering, several activities are carried out such as *dāna* offering, ritual offering, *pūjā*, along with ritual songs (*caryā geeta* or *cacā*), ritual dance (*caryānritya*) and feast. Similarly, *Śākyas* have such assembly in the name of *baregu*, *Guthī*. *Newār* monastics have a unique working pattern through their *guthī*. Details on participation in annual councils of ecclesiastical affairs have been already discussed above in previous chapter.

#### 9.4.3.3 Participation in annual religious *Guthīs*

Besides, there are special *Guthīs* meant for the worship of a particular deity e.g. *guthī* established to ensure an annual performance of the *Vasundharā* observance, *Falhuguthī* or *guthī* for worship of *Karuṇāmaya*, *Gharsāguthī* of *Dhākhwā* clan, *Tāremām Saṅgha guthī* (*bhajan khalah*) for religious singing, *Prajñāpārāmīta guthī* for recitation of the *Prajñāpārāmīta* text, Wednesday *guthī* or *tutah guthī* for recitation of religious hymns.<sup>614</sup> A *guthi* is a socio-religious organization of *Newārs*. There was the tradition of working together through *guthīs*. It is quite logical to accept the saying that *Buddhist Saṅgha* induced the culture of working together. In *Lichchavī* period, *guthīs* were called *Gosṭhī*. There were mention of *Ārchā Gosṭhī* (concerning about sculpture making), *Baditrā Gosṭhī* (concerning about religious singing), *Pāniya Gosṭhī* (concerning about arrangement of drinking water), *Dhoja Gosṭhī* (for religious wooden pole play during festivals), *Dhūp* or *Pradip Gosṭhī* (concerning about lighting incense and oil lamps at the religious shrines), *Mārgonmārjan Gosṭhī* (concerning about maintaining cleanliness of

<sup>614</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 243-244

religious and public places), *Pranāli Gosṭhī* (for construction of water spout-taps) etc.<sup>615</sup> These *Gosṭhīs* were called *Guthīs* in Medieval period. *Guthīs* convene annual gathering at least once a year when annual rituals are performed, followed by communal meal. The monastics as the members of *guthīs* are required to participate in such gathering. A network of *guthī* institutions binds monastics and laity.<sup>616</sup>

#### 9.4.3.4 Festivals

The celebration of festivals is a part of human activities which developed in the course of time of civilization. It took momentum in growing when divinity and spirituality got mixed with it. Various festivals emerged. So, the *Buddhists* have their own festivals which are celebrated in buddhistic way with the involvement of monastics and the laity. Every festival has relevant a legend or folk story to tell. In today's mechanical age, it becomes important as it brings closeness among the people teaching them to work in group enhancing amity, friendship etc.

There are many special or holy days held throughout the year celebrated by the *Buddhist* community. *Buddhist* Festivals are always joyful occasions. Typically on a festival day, lay people will go the local temple or monastery and make offering of food and other articles to the deities and monks of the monasteries. Some keep fasting following the Five Precepts or Eight precepts and listen to a *Dharma* talk. In the afternoon, and in the evening they make visit to *Buddhist* shrine concerned with the festival join in a ceremony of circumambulation as a sign of respect to the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*. The day will conclude with evening chanting of the *Buddhist stotras*.

The way the local *Buddhist* followers adhere to the *Buddhism* is very unique and wonderful in Nepal. *Buddhism* is the field of literacy but most of the Nepalese people are illiterate. Even though *Buddhism* thrived well consistently in Nepal while it almost disappeared in India. How could it be possible? It is very

---

<sup>615</sup> Bhadra Ratna Bajracharya, "Loponmukha Mārgonmarjangoṣṭhi (Margonmarjangosthi in the verge of Extinction)" in *VAJRAYĀNA*, Trimonthly, Year 1, Issue 1, November, 2009, (Kathmandu: Nepal Traditional Buddhist Association, 2009), P. 67

<sup>616</sup> Gopal Singha Nepali, *The Newars*, (Kathmandu: Himalayan Book sellers, Reprint 1988, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1965), P. 191

interesting. In Nepal (mainly in Kathmandu), local *Buddhist* people have a traditional unique *Buddhist* social structure driven by the spirit of festival celebration. They were bound like a strong single group. They work devotedly together for the cause of their faith, the basis of which lie in the philosophy of *Pañca Buddha*<sup>617</sup> and *Nava Grantha Sūtra* (nine holy texts as mentioned above).<sup>618</sup>

Besides, most of the annual functions are conducted in the form of festivals in which monastics play significant role with the participation of lay followers. The most important ones are the chariot pulling festivals of *Karuṇāmaya* in Patan and Kathmandu in which most of the monastics have some important duties to perform. Most of the main calendrical festivals fall within 4 months (*Caturmāsa*) from *Śrāvan* to *Kārtika* (which falls from July to October time).<sup>619</sup> *Newār Buddhists* consider observance of recurrent festivals meritorious deed. For some, religion is a matter of action, not belief, and those actions also involve rituals, festivals and music making which were good enough for most of them.

Kathmandu Valley is said to be the land of festivals. People in the Valley are enjoying these festivals from generations to generations. There are innumerable festivals to cite. Throughout the year, various *Buddhist* festivals like *Gūnlā dharma*, *Pañca-dāna*, *Vaisākh Pūrṇimā*, *Lhuti Pūrni*, *Caitya pūjā*, *Bāhā pūjā*, *Baidyao bwayegu*, *Samyak*, *Khāi Sanlhu*, *Sithinakha* on *Jesṭha Śukla Khasṭhi* (6<sup>th</sup> of Darker half of the month *Jesṭha*)<sup>620</sup>, *Nakwā Diśi*, *Gumpunhi*, *Jugahcarhe*, *Cathā*, *Gatilā*, *Kati Pūnhi*, *Gathāmuga*, Chariot pulling of *Rato Matchendranāth* and *Seto Matchendranāth Lokeśwaras*, Bathing ceremonies of *Karuṇāmaya*, *Mukha Aṣṭami*, *Sakimilā Pūnhi*, *Yohmari Pūnhi*, *Sri Pañcami*, *Holi Pūnhi*, *Vasundharā pūjā* (on *Tritiyā*, third day of the dark half of the month *Āświn*) and so forth are carried out in due time in self motivated manner.

*Upāku* wonegu of Kathmandu and *Matayā* of Lalitpur have a separate significance being unique *Buddhist* practice which speak about the sacredness of the

<sup>617</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 30), P.18-21

<sup>618</sup> Hera Kaji Bajracharya, "Nava Granthayā Sār Who Newā Boudha Saṅskriti ukiyā Prabhāva (Essence of Nava Grantha & its Effects on *Newār* Buddhist culture), *The Lotus* (Issue 20), 2003, P. 12

<sup>619</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 214

<sup>620</sup> Munindra Ratna Bajracharya, "Kumarakhasṭhi Arthāt Sithiparva (Kumarakhasṭhi or Sithiparva)", in *Gorkhapatra* daily, June 7, 2011 (Jesṭha 24, 2068), P. 7



Kathmandu valley is something unique. Annual Festivals like *Matayā* and *Upāku* which take the form of a local pilgrimage play a crucial role in legitimizing the view of Lalitpur and Kāntipur of the Kathmandu valley as a sacred space. Anachronistic *Adya Mahādāna*, *Āryāvarta*, *Aṣṭavaitarāga*, *Dwādaśa Tīrtha* also indicate the sacredness of the valley, local pilgrimage visit to which imparts merit making.

#### 9.4.4 Occasional functions

Under this category are some of the important *Buddhist* festivals which are observed on occasions in the interval of some years like twelve year cycled festivals of *bungadyo*, *Vajrayogini*, *Sankatā*, *Samyakdān*, *Dipankhā* etc. which repeat in every twelve year period and the local name *Barha-varshe Melā* meaning twelve years carnivals. In Patan, the *Buddhists* celebrate *Samyakdān* festival in the span of every five years. Occasional functions also include optional *Pañcadān* and *Samyakdān* which are observed when a generous able donor comes up to celebrate them.

Sometimes the monastics go occasional hiatus for long time meditation retreats or intensive practice. Nowadays, performance of such retreats has become very rare.

##### 9.4.4.1 *Bāhāpūjā*, *Civāpūjā*, *Karuṇāmaya pūjā* etc.

*Bāhā pūjā* means worshipping *Gandhuri* or main deities of the *Bāhā* monasteries. *Bahi* monasteries are not included in such worship. *Bāhā pūjā* is mostly organized on *Pūrṇimā*, *Aṣṭami*, *Sankrānti* day by individual *Buddhist* or a family. The participants also observe fasting on that day. All the main *bāhā* and branch monasteries are visited and main deities are worshipped. The visiting participants go in procession along with musical bands. The materials offered are mostly similar to those offered in *Pañcadān* and *Samyak dāna* like- unhusked rice grains, polished rice grains, legumes, grams, salt, cord, chalk powder, sweet items, sweeping brushes, coins, fruits, biscuits, oil, writing copies, pencils, pens, books, booklets, herbs, etc. While worshipping the *Kwā-pā-dyos* of monasteries, the head of the organizers who wore *betāli* (white cloth wrapped around the forehead) first offers water through a conch shell. The action is followed simultaneously with recitation of *mantra pātha* by the *Guru*, *Vajrācārya*. Wish for the benefit of all is expressed. *Bāhā pūjā* begins from the worship of *Svayambhū* deity, the *Ādi-*

*Buddha*. After completion of *Bāhā pūjā*, all the participants are invited to a *Ganeśa pūjā*, mostly at Koila Ganeśasthān of Covār when *prasād*, offerings are distributed among them.

Like in the fashion of *Bāhā pūjā*, there take place *Karuṇāmaya pūjā*, *Gha pūjā* (*Kalaśa pūjā*), *Vasundharā pūjā*, *Civā pūjā* (*Caitya pūjā*). Worshipping pattern and offering made are more or less similar to *Bāhā pūjā*, only the deities focused are changed. In *Civā pūjā*, all the *caitya* of the valleys are visited and offered with material gifts. The family who have established a *caitya*, must organized such *Civāpūjā* in the following year. And this festival is called *Wonla wanegu*. In *Karuṇāmaya pūjā*, all the major *Karuṇāmaya* shrines situated within *Nepal-maṇḍala*, which are counted twelve in number, are visited and worshipped. The 12 *Karuṇāmaya* and time of visits are as follows- (1) *Adināth Lokeśwara*, Chovār on *Kārtik Śukla Aṣṭami*, (2) *Jatādhārī Lokeśwara*, Tanga *Bāhā*, on *Mārga Śukla Aṣṭami*, (3) *Amoghpaśś Lokeśwara*, Jana *Bāhā*, on *Poush Śukla Aṣṭami*, (4) *Hari harihar Vāhan Lokeśwara*, Chāngu, on *Māgh Śukla Aṣṭami* (5) *Sristikāntā Lokeśwara*, Nālā, *Falgun Śukla Aṣṭami*, (6) *Padmapāṇi Lokeśwara*, Bungamati, on *Chaitra Śukla Aṣṭami*, (7) *Ṣadkṣeri Lokeśwara*, Bhaktapur, on *Vaiśākh Śukla Aṣṭami*, (8) *Padmapāṇi Lokeśwara*, Bhaktapur, on *Vaiśāk Śukla Aṣṭami*, (9) *Kārandavyuha Lokeśwara*, Thimi, on *Āsādh Śukla Aṣṭami*, (10) *Nilkantha Lokeśwara*, Dhalchen, on *Śrawan Śukla Aṣṭami*, (11) *Mayājāl Lokeśwara*, Twaya *Bāhā*, on *Bhādra Śukla Aṣṭami*, and (12) *Ṣadkṣeri Lokeśwara*, Lagankhel on *Aswin Śukla Aṣṭami*.<sup>621</sup> Making the *Karuṇāmaya pūjā* short, only four popular *Karuṇāmaya* shrines may be taken into consideration. These four shrines are *Padmapāṇi Lokeśwara*, Bungamati, *Ādināth Lokeśwara*, Chovār, *Amoghpaśś Lokeśwara*, Jana *Bāhā*, and *Sristikāntā Lokeśwara*, Nālā.

On *Tritiyā* of dark half of the month *Āswin*, *Vasundharā pūjā* is observed. All *Vasundharā* enshrined in the monasteries are visited and offered worship, following a procession along with music. This is being celebrated in regular basis in Lalitpur.

<sup>621</sup> Tirtha Ratna Shakya, *Nepal Maṇḍalakā Baudhaharuko Dhārmika Abhyāsa Ra Jīvan Śāili* (*Religious Practice and Life style of Buddhists of Nepal-mandala*), (Kathmandu: Buddhadharma Adhyayan Gosthi, 2008), Pp. 83-86

Service to river pilgrimage, the *Tīrtha sewā-Dwādaśa Tīrtha Sewā*, *Aṣṭa Vaitarāga Tīrtha*, *Upa Tīrtha*, *Five-Tīrtha* mentioned in *Svayambhū* is also a part of Buddhist activities.<sup>622</sup> Likewise, *Pīṭha sewā* visiting twenty four *Śaktipīṭha* (power places), *Aunsi pūjā* and many more are observed in regular or occasional basis. The *pithas* are usually open-air shrines, but may be closed structures too. In these *pithas*, the *Mātrikās* are worshipped with their followers (*gaṇas*) in form of stone statues or natural stones, or brass images. *Newār Buddhists* associate the *Mātrikās* with 24 human qualities, which can mastered by visiting three sets of eight *Mātrikā* (*Aṣṭa mātrikā*) *piṭhas*. Sometimes, they are paired with the *Aṣṭabhairava* (Eight *Bhairavas*)

---

<sup>622</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 602), P. 45

## CHAPTER X

### Monastery- The Architectural Tradition in *Buddhist* Monasticism

Some observers are of opinion that there is no monasticism in Nepalese *Buddhism*. If so, a very striking question arises what and why numerous *Buddhist* monasteries which are still extant in Kathmandu valley, stood for. The valley is distinguishingly known for its old monasteries attracting scores of visitors/tourists even today. One can easily assume these were not mere buildings. The dwelling place of *Saṅgha* members or the monks is a monastery where they dedicate their life in the practice and propagation of the *Dharma*. After all, monasteries are the buildings where monks or monastics live as a community.<sup>623</sup> An attempt is made here to provide information on old monasteries of *Nepal-maṇḍala* related to indigenous Nepalese *Buddhism*<sup>624</sup> also known as *Newār Buddhism*. Structural design of the monasteries gives clear indication that they must have been used for specific purpose which is non other than practice and propagation of *Dharma*. Monasteries (*Vihāras*) served as centres for the socio-religious affairs of the entire *Buddhist* community.<sup>625</sup> In other words, they are the centre where monastic activities are carried out. Another way to assess at the magnitude of *Newār* monasticism is by looking at its magnificent Monasteries. It is clear that Nepal is the home to the large number of old monasteries in the world in the modern era. It serves as exemplifying and providing proof of the greatness of the Nepalese monastic system. To create a *Buddhist* society with a large monastic segment, however, meant there had to be thousands of people willing to pursue the *Buddhist* teachings. These people are bound together and to the *Dharma* through the monasteries. In Nepal, the monastery is a *Newār Buddhist* religious

---

<sup>623</sup> Advance learner's Dictionary, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 49), P. 751

<sup>624</sup> Nepalese *Buddhism* is generally understood as traditional *Newār Buddhism* though there are at present following three types of *Buddhism* in the kingdom of Nepal.

1. *Theravādins* 2. Northern *Buddhism* or Himalayan *Buddhism*, and 3. Traditional Nepalese *Buddhism*

<sup>625</sup> Slusser, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 1), P. 288

complex where monastic *Saṅgha* members live by performing different types of rites and rituals. It is a place of religious bliss and *Buddhist* religious centre.

### 10.1 Monastery-meaning and its types

Monastery is defined as a building in which *Buddhist* icons are lodged, and in which monks and nuns i.e. the monastics are housed.<sup>626</sup> The definition does not wholly fit to the description of earlier monastic dwellings at the time of *Buddha*. In the earliest stages, the monastic institution had room neither for worship of icons nor for the quartering of monks. It meant a temporary shelter for eremitic monks from all four quarters (*catudisā Saṅgha*) at difficult time like rainy season.<sup>627</sup> After the transformation of monastic shelter into the monastery called initially as ‘*Vihāra*’<sup>628</sup> deriving from its *Pāli* root ‘*Vihāreti*’ meaning for walking and staying, monasticism grew profusely. Our knowledge of *Buddhist* monastic institutions is derived mostly from the *Vinaya*, the *Buddhist* monastic code, which however, took its present textual form only about the beginning of the Christian era. Thus, these texts, though they refer to many incidents contemporaneous with the *Buddha* himself, reflect the thinking of a much later time, when they were redacted. As the monastery reaches full maturity later, it developed as a coenobium.

In Nepalese context, a monastery not only denotes to dwelling place of monastics, seat of triple gems, centre of *Buddhist* activities, store of *Buddhist* icons and teachings, it also bears the total essence of Nepalese *Buddhism* because it as a whole is visualized as *Vajra-dhātu maṇḍala*. *Maṇḍala* is one of the important part of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* and it is used as the medium of actualizing *Buddhist* concepts. Unless knowledge of *maṇḍala* is known, *Buddhism* of *Nepal-maṇḍala* cannot be understood. *Vajradhātu maṇḍala* is one of the *Mandala* which represents *dharmakāya*, the *Buddha* essence. According to the celebrated *Buddhist* text *Kriyāsaṅgrahapañjikā*, *Vihāra* is constructed on *Vajradhātu maṇḍala*. Therefore, Nepalese monastery itself represents *Buddha* essence as it is erected over *Vajradhātu maṇḍala*.

---

<sup>626</sup> Gadjin Nagao “The Architectural Tradition in Buddhist Monasticism” in A.K. Narain(Ed.), *Studies in History of Buddhism*, (Delhi: Buddhist World press, 2010), P. 189

<sup>627</sup> *Ibid*, P. 190

<sup>628</sup> Bhadanta Anandakaushalyayan, *Pāli Hindi Kośa*, (Nagpur: Sugat Prakashan Co, 1989), P. 305

### 10.1.1 *Bāhā* and *Bahi* monasteries

Monasteries in *Nepal-maṇḍala* were called *Vihāras* in the ancient period, *Mahāvihāras* in Medieval period, and *Bāhās* and *Bahis* in post medieval or modern period till today. Though all the monasteries of *Newār Buddhism* is still called *Mahāvihāra* in *Saṅskrit*, they differ substantially according to their *Saṅghas*. However, these terms are often interchangeably used to denote the monastery. They must have been called *Mahāvihāra* considering their importance. The term *Mahāvihāra* was used in India for a cluster of *Vihāras*, or a large *Vihāra* that had many branches, such as existed in Nālandā.<sup>629</sup> This definition seems valid only for big monasteries like *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*, and *Rudravarṇa Mahāvihāra* having many *śākhā* (branch) *viḥāras*. Otherwise, in Nepal individual monasteries having significant role is called *Mahāvihāra*. The three cities of Kathmandu valley—Kāntipur, Lalitpur, and Bhaktapur consist of a large number of *Buddhist* monasteries which are locally known as *Bāhā* or *Bahi*. The existence of numerous *Vihāras* in the Kathmandu valley, more particularly in Patan City, suggests that monasticism is very old and has remained popular in Nepal. *Bāhā* is the degenerated form of its *Saṅskrit* term *Vihāra* for the monastery.<sup>630</sup> Though the meaning and purpose are nearly same, *Bāhās* and *Bahis* slightly differ in architectural structure. The differentiation between *bāhā* and *bahī* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* follows from the two different monastic traditions these two types of *Vihāras* represent in the past. It is assumed that *Bahi* deriving from the word *Bāhira* meaning outside settlements was designed to accommodate celibate *Bhikṣus* only. So, they were originally built outside the residential regions of the city. The location of *Bahis* like *Pucho bahi*, *Guitah bahi* prove this postulation. In some texts, *Bahi* is mentioned under the class “*Mādhyāmaka Vihāra*”.<sup>631</sup> The sites of many *viḥāra* have been occupied by similar structure for at least 1200 years.<sup>632</sup> This is known from the architecture of the monastery construction which was mostly based on the text *Kriyā Samgraha*. Present *viḥāras* have preserved ancient style though none of them is older than perhaps three to four hundred years since they were either constructed or renovated during medieval period.

<sup>629</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 9

<sup>630</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 3, 21-28, 247 and 425-27

<sup>631</sup> (i) Hemraj Shakyā, *Akṣeśvar Mahāvihāra Pucho, Chagu Adyayana*, (Lalitpur: Boudha *Vihāra Saṅgha*, 1995), P. 4

(ii) Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 201)

<sup>632</sup> Korn *Op.cit.* (f.n. 109), P. 27

Later *Vajrayāna* ideals permitted marriage to the monks. Those monks who married, left *Bahi* and joined another type of *Vihāra* called *Bāhā* where they lived with their family as *Grihastha Bhikṣus*.<sup>633</sup> This shifting was taking place in thirteenth century, as Dharmaswāmin's account testifies that pure *Mahāyāna* without esoteric features was still in practice though most of the old *Vihāras* (*Bahis* ?) had been deserted.<sup>634</sup> With the growing popularity of *Vajrayāna*, tendency of following *grihastha Bhikṣus* system also grew. As a consequence, more and more *Bāhās* were built. Some scholars believe that *Newār* monasteries (*Bāhā* and *Bahi* both) once housed celibate monks who converted to married *Bare* later.<sup>635</sup> But, the former view seems more reasonable as the number of *bāhās* is much more than the *Bahis*. From the strictly religious point of view, all *Bāhā* and *Bahi* are equally monasteries (*vihāra*) and all of them must have at least a *caitya*, a main shrine and a *tantric* shrine (*āgan*).<sup>636</sup> And in those period anyone from any caste could become a monk.

With urbanization, *Bahis* also became surrounded by the settlements as the *bāhā* was and its original purpose remained less tenable. While *bāhās* have an explicit *Tantric* agenda and remained place for *vajrayānā* practice, *bahīs* are institutions where, by contrast, the principle of celibate monkhood was emphasized, and so believed to have stuck to the pure *Mahāyāna Buddhism*.<sup>637</sup> This view is also revealed from Wright chronicle which mentioned *Bahi* as '*nivanik vānaprastha Vihāra*' (meaning a place for recluses aiming at *Nirvāṇa*) while *bāhā* '*saṃsārik tantric Vihāra*' (meaning place for practitioners of *tantric* serving worldly people).<sup>638</sup> Therefore, *Bahi* is the monastery where celibate monks resided.<sup>639</sup> This must be the reason that still now the monastics of *Bahi* are called *Bikhu bare*, actually it must have meant *Bhikkṣu Bare* (celibate monks), while others are called just *Bare* (Venerable ones). Another view is that the *bahis* were a lower class of *Vihāra* where the *Bhikṣus* or the monastics would receive their first training. After

---

<sup>633</sup> *Ibid*, P. 27

<sup>634</sup> D.R. Regmi, *Medieval Nepal*, Vol. II, (Delhi: Rupa & Co., 1<sup>st</sup> published in 1965, reprint 2007), P. 865

<sup>635</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36), Pp. 129-148

<sup>636</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 168

<sup>637</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 513), P. 161

<sup>638</sup> Wright, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 20), P. 237

<sup>639</sup> Surya Vikram Gyawali, *Nepal Upatyekāko Madhyakālin Itihāsa-879 to 1768 CE (Medieval History of Nepal Valley-879 to 1768)*, (Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy, 2019 B.S. ), P. 183

completing training they would become *upasampradāya Bhikṣus* and join a *bāhā* for further study and training.<sup>640</sup>

Apart from above mentioned differences between *Bāhā* and *Bahi*, some important structural differences between these two monasteries are as follows:<sup>641</sup>

	<b><i>Bāhā</i></b>	<b><i>Bahi</i></b>
1.	Lions guard the entrance	No lion guard
2.	One low plinth-step surround the building externally	At least one high plinth-step surrounds the building externally
3.	<i>Torana</i> (Tripanum) above entrance door	No <i>Toraṇa</i>
4.	A clearly defined entrance area(foyer) with <i>Phalchās</i> (Vestibules)	Partition walls forming the entrance area: probably a later addition
5.	The central room of the front wing a bay-window facing the <i>chauk</i>	The central room of the front wing has a wide doorway with balcony facing the road.
6.	Four narrow staircases leading to four separate groups of rooms	One broad stone staircase leading to the hall of the upper floor
7.	Small groups of rooms organized into isolated groups	An open colonnade in both storeys
8.	The shrine is the part of the building structure	The shrine is an isolated room within the portico structure
9.	Religious services are held in the small shrine	Religious services are held within the shrine as well as processing around the shrine in the case of mass <i>pūjā</i>
10.	A bell shaped pinnacle or <i>Gajur</i> on the roof directly above the shrine.	A temple-like lantern ( <i>cupolā</i> ) above the shrine.
	Representative example: <i>Chusyā bāhā</i> ( <i>Guṇākara Mahāvihāra</i> )	Representative example: <i>Pintu Bahi</i> ( <i>Shri Gopichandra Mahāvihāra</i> )

Table 2.showing differences between *Bāhā* and *Bahi* monasteries

<sup>640</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 19

<sup>641</sup> Korn, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 109), P. 36



*Bahis* are considered lower form of *Buddhist* institutions than *bāhās*. This seems to mean that the schedule of rituals in a *bāhā* is more rigid, the rituals more elaborate and better organized. *Bāhā* and *Bahi* monasteries mostly have *Śākyas* in their *saṅghas*.

### 10.1.2 *Mū Bāhā*, the principal monastery

Some *bāhās* are classed as principal monasteries, *Mū bāhā*, to which is attached separate or independent *Saṅgha* for performance of its monastic activities. The *Saṅgha* has its own elders and is not considered a part of another *Saṅgha*. *Mū Bāhā* generally must have *Vajrācāryas* as their *saṅgha* members, exclusively or in addition to *Śākyabhikṣus*. However, this does not apply in Patan as there are *Mū bāhās* without *Vajrācāryas* *Saṅgha* members. In other words, *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members are associated only with *Mū Bāhā* monasteries. Initiation programs regularly take place in *Mū Bāhā*. One ground of knowing *Mū bāhā* is that there is a ritual to beat *Dharmagandī*.<sup>642</sup> Beating *Dharmagandī* is to inform the locals about the occurrence of religious performance at the monasteries. Previously, it was done four times a day, but these days it is done only one time as a part of ritual.

They must have been called principal *vihāra*, as they have active *saṅghas* that play dominant role in decision making regarding *Newār* monasticism. *Śākyas* residing in principal *vihāras* are called *Śākyabhikṣus* or *Śākyavaṃśa*, while those associated to *bāhā* and *kācā bāhā* are called *Śākyavaṃśa* and those in the *Bahi*, *Brahmacarya bhikṣus* or *Brahmacarya śākya* or *Bikhu bare*. Nowadays, the difference is considered negligible.

### 10.1.3 *Kacā Bāhā*, *Kacā Bahi*

Some principal *Mahāvihāra* (*Mū Bāhā*), *Bāhās* and *Bahi* have their branches which are categorized as *Sāmanya Vihāra* (ordinary monastery) called *kachā bāhā* meaning branched monastery. Daily routine ritual *pūjā* is performed but initiation for the monks does not take place in such *kacā bāhā*. Branch (*Śākhā* or *kacā*) *bāhā* means a *bāhā* whose *Saṅgha* is not independent but is considered a part of the

<sup>642</sup> Shakya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 631), P. 4

*Saṅgha* of a principal *bāhā* where initiations are performed. It can be easily assumed that as the *Saṅgha* members grew, those monastics who could not be accommodated in the main *bāhā* were settled there.

#### 10.1.4 *Nani-bāhā*

Sometimes, *Mū bāhās* are associated with another type of ordinary monastery called *Nani-bāhā*.<sup>643</sup> These monasteries are mostly devoid of *bāhā* sophistication or elaboration in terms of their art contents and ritual performance. They are similar to *kacā Bāhā* but even smaller monasteries having limited functions. The ritual of beating *Dharmagandī* is not performed in *Bahi*, *Kacā bāhā* and *Nani-bāhā*.

One cannot ignore that all *Mu Bāhā*, *bāhā* and *bahi* are *Vihāra*, the monasteries and may bear the formal names of “*Mahāvihāra*”. For example, *Than bāhā* is also called *Vikramśīla Mahāvihāra*. Thus, all the *Newār* Monasteries have at least two names- one in *Saṅskṛit* and another in Vernacular *Newārī*.<sup>644</sup>

#### 10.2 Development of Monastery in *Nepal-maṇḍala*<sup>645</sup>

*Vihāras* or monasteries must have come into existence in the Kathmandu Valley a long time ago.<sup>646</sup> According to *Svayambhū purāṇa*, chronicles and popular belief, the Kathmandu Valley became fit for human habitation after *Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī* drained the water from the Valley which was once a lake- *Nāgbāsa daha* (serpent lake). *Mañjuśrī* then enthroned King Dharmākara and the large number of the followers of the king began to reside in the valley as celibate monks who were influenced and initiated by *Krakucchanda Buddha* in *Tretāyuga*.<sup>647</sup> When the *Buddha* stayed at *Bāghdvāra* of *Śīvapuri Hill* (*Siphucho Hill* in *Newārī*) in the north of Nepal he was believed to have ordained some 700 disciples including *Gunadhoj Brāhman* and *Avayananda Kṣetri*.<sup>648</sup> The *Tathāgata* established a

<sup>643</sup> Please see below under the heading Stocial Connectivity of *Newār* Monastery

<sup>644</sup> For a quick glance on typology of *Newār* monasteries, please see chart. No. 1 in appendix.

<sup>645</sup> For other details, please refer to History of monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, Chapter

<sup>646</sup> Vaidya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 150), P.1

<sup>647</sup> (i) Shakya, and Bajracharya, (Tr.), *Op.cit.* (f.n. 169), Pp. 94-104

(ii) Bhandari, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 217ii), P. 21

<sup>648</sup> (i) Shakya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 217i), P. 19

(ii) Bhandari, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 217ii), P. 20

monastery and arranged for the first time a *Saṅgha*.<sup>649</sup> It is believed that *Vihāras* were built for the residence of these celibate monks for their monastic practice.

Historically the resting places of the monks, *āvāsa* or *ārām* in *Śākyamuni Buddha*'s time, were the monastery.<sup>650</sup> As mentioned in *Buddhist* literature, Gautam *Buddha* and his followers stayed at *Nyāgrodhārāma Vihāra* during his visit to Kapilavastu of Nepal. It is said that in the first year of his enlightenment, twenty thousand monks accompanied the *Buddha* and stayed at this *Vihāra*. However, it is understood that earlier *Buddhist* monument was the *caitya* which predates monastery that we conceived of. It is evident from historical records in India e.g. Sānchi, Bharhut, Bhājā and Nepal. *Svayambhū caitya*, *Namrā caitya* (*Namo Buddha caitya*), *Sānkhu caitya*, *Baudha caitya* of *Nepal-maṇḍala* indicated the same. Then there was a tradition of constructing *vihāra* in the vicinity or premises of the *caityas*. There were remnants of monasteries in India near the *caityas*. In Nepal *Sinagu vihāra* of *Svayambhū*, *Gun vihāra* of *Sānkhu*, and so forth reveal the same fact. Still, *Svayambhū area*, *Baudha caitya area* and *Namrā area* are among the most preferred sites for the construction of monasteries (mainly *Gompās* i.e. *Buddhist Monasteries of Himalayan Buddhism* based on Tibetan style)). *Caitya* later became an integral part of the monastery. Therefore, it can be said that in the beginning, monasteries were made outside the settlement areas in solitary places, mostly near the famous *caityas*. Later, monasteries also came to be surrounded by the settlements with growing urbanization. After the conversion of celibate monks into married householder monastics, monasteries specially *bāhās* were built within city area so that they could be engaged in various occupations and could have better social involvement. Still there were *vihāras* '*Bahis*' which continued to house celibate monks, located outside the residential areas in Medieval period. But, later these *Bahis* too were surrounded by the settlements due to unchecked growing urbanization. By the end of medieval period almost all *vihāras* were surrounded by the settlements. In Lalitpur, the state territories were demarcated by the cluster of *vihāras* in divisions like *Uttar vihāra* (Northern *vihāra* site), *Dakṣiṇ vihāra* (southern *vihāra* site), and *Pimbāhāl* (site of *Pim vihāra*) ruled separately by feudal *Mahāpātras* (three dynasties of *Mahāpātras* among *saptakutumba*- seven dynasties)

---

(iii) Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 193

<sup>649</sup> Shakya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 406),

<sup>650</sup> For other details, please refer to earlier Chapter IV, under subheading Monastery.

till the time of Viṣṇu Singh around 1720 A.D.<sup>651</sup> Similarly, territories of Kāntipur were divided according to a group of monasteries at a place called *Pui* (a consolidated *vihāra* area). It shows the importance of monasteries in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

Historically known oldest *Vihāra* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, is *Gūn Vihāra* situated on the hillock in Sāṅkhu. This *Vihāra* is supposed to have been made to accommodate the members of *Buddhist* missionary sent by Emperor Aśoka to Himvatkhanda under the leadership of Majjintikā *Therā* possibly in 236 BC.<sup>652</sup> According to top historian Baburam Acarya, twenty four *vihāras* were built by the former king Pushupreksha or Puspadeva, some generation before the establishment of *Lichchavī* dynasty by king Bhumivarma, to provide accommodation for *bandejus*, the monks.<sup>653</sup> Several *Vihāras* were mentioned in various *Lichchavī* inscriptions indicating the popularity of practice of Monasticism in Nepal. For example, *Gūn Vihāra*, *Mān Vihāra*, *Śrī Rāj Vihāra*, *Kharjurikā Vihāra*, and *Madhyama Vihāra* are mentioned in the famous Hāndigaon inscription of best known *Lichchavī* period king Amśuvarma (621 AD). About 15 monasteries were known of *Lichchavi* period.<sup>654</sup> Monasteries were established in different period by various rulers and individuals. Most of them are ancient. The number of monasteries grew to the highest peak during Medieval period of the Nepalese history. The present existing monasteries are the remnant of the Medieval period. It would be interesting to note the monasteries built by the contemporary rulers. Some examples are as follows:<sup>655</sup>

*Lichchavī* king Vrisdeva of 4<sup>th</sup> century after having renovated the *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* under the able leadership of *Bhikṣu Śāntiśīla* established the monastery ‘*Śrīsamhegu Vihāra*’ on the *Svayambhū* hill. He also had a monastery built in Bandegā- a village which became famous as Bandepur. The king Śankardeva (the son of Vrisdeva) constructed ‘*Śrī Mayurvarṇa Mahāvihāra*’ at the instigation of JayaŚrī Misra. The king Dharmadeva built *Rāj Vihāra* and established a *Dharma caitya*. The king Mānadeva constructed *Mān Vihāra*. The king Śivadeva built ‘*Śivadeva Vihāra*’ (now *Uku bāhā*) which was later renovated by the king

<sup>651</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 471

<sup>652</sup> Bhikṣu Sudarshan, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 237), Pp. 30-32

<sup>653</sup> Baburam Acarya, “Pracīn Nepal Ra Yasko Saṁskṛiti (Ancient Nepal and its Culture)”, *Gorkhapatra* 2018, Chaitra 2.

<sup>654</sup> Regmi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 318), Pp. 145-46. The list is given in Appendix

<sup>655</sup> Shakya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 631), P. 2

Rudradeva. King Amśuvarma is credited to have built another *Rāj Vihāra*. The king Narendradeva constructed *Rājākīrti Vihāra* and presented to his *ācārya* Bandhudatta. King Devādeva had built *Devpāl vihār*. Similarly, the king Champadeva established '*Futo Vihāra*'. The king Bālarchandeva erected '*Jeṣṭhavarṇa Mahāvihār*' and initiated the festival *Matayā* which is still celebrated. The king Bhaskardeva built a number of *Vihāras* like *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Keśachadrapārāvarta Mahāvihāra* etc. Likewise, king Gūnakamadeva built *Padmacakra Vihāra* and *Ratnākar Mahāvihāra*. Gūnalaxmi Varma constructed *Dhumbāhā*. King Indradeva constructed *Kachchapālagirī Mahāvihāra* (*Co:bāhā*) and *Jayamanohara Mahāvihāra* (*Su:bāhā*). Jagatpal, the feudal ruler of Lalitpur in in *Pim Bāhāl* territory built *Jagatpāl vihāra* in Kīrtipur around 1515 A.D.<sup>656</sup> Therewere several other references regarding construction of monasteries. All this shows how monasticism was supported by the kings. Besides, there were monasteries built by the monastics and devotees. Therefore, the rulers, monastics and devotees contributed to monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala* by construction of monasteries, most of which still survive today being repeatedly renovated at times.

Till the *Lichchavī* period monasteries were built for lodging the monks and nuns coming from four quarters as it is understood from the *Lichchavī* inscriptions bearing the line of words '*caturdirśārya bhikṣu saṅgha*<sup>657</sup>',- meaning for the *saṅgha* of monks coming from four directions. On one hand it shows that the purpose of *vihāra* in *Lichchavī* time was as per instruction of the *Buddha* who upon being questioned by Anathapindaka stated in reply that *vihāra* donation is for monks of the *saṅgha* hailing from four quarters.<sup>658</sup> On the other hand, it also reveals that monks had not turned to married householders but were still peripatetic.

In the Medieval period main objectives of establishing a *Buddhist* monastery was to help *Buddhist* lifestyle, for the benefit of all, to impart *Buddhist* teaching for the improvement of conduct and thought and to create field of merit by establishing *Buddhaśāsan*. Besides the rulers, the leading *Buddhist* masters/scholars also contributed in the field, "the *Buddhist* monastery". As already described earlier in the chapter 'History of monasticism in *Buddhism* of *Nepal-maṇḍala*, early medieval period witnessed a turning point in the monasticism and the *Buddhism*

<sup>656</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 472

<sup>657</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 496-497

<sup>658</sup> *Vinayapitaka, Cullavagga, Senasankkhandhaka* (6<sup>th</sup> council CD)

grew to the peak with construction of numerous monasteries. *Vajrayāna* became popular and monasteries were built to suit *vajrayānic* form of monasticism. Monasteries were constructed following elaborate religious process mainly of rituals.

Some of the renowned *Bāhās* in their preserved and classic form are *Kwā-bāhā*, *Uku-bāhā*, *Ha:-bāhā* and *Guji-bāhā* of Lalitpur, *Chusyā-bāhā*, newly reconstructed *Itum-bāhā* and *Yatkā-bāhā* of Kāntipur. Others are *Bhinche-bāhā*, *Bu-bāhā*, *Su-bāhā*, *Taga-bāhā*, and *Ta-bāhā*. Similarly well preserved *bahis* are *Cikan-bahi*, *Ibā-bahi*, *Jyā-bahi*, *Naka-bahi*, *Nhyāyka-bahi*, *Ubābahi*, *I-bahi*, *Pintu-bahi* and *Konti-bahi* of Lalitpur. Other *bahis* like *Khwāy-bahi*, *Ilā-bahi*, *Guīta-bahi*, *Gustala-bahi*, *Thāpā-bahi*, *Dhapagā-bahi* are in the state of deterioration.

There are more than 400 ancient monasteries-*Mahāvihār as* and *Vihāras* (*Bāhā* and *Bahis*)<sup>659</sup> related to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* in Kathmandu valley and some 96 (51 in Kathmandu Valley and 45 outside the valley) *Vihāra* related to *Theravādi* tradition. Number of *Gompās*<sup>660</sup> is approximately 4000. Thus, though small in size Nepal has comparatively and surprisingly the greatest number of *Buddhist* Monasteries (*Vihāra* and *Mahāvihāra*) and *gompas* which serve as the teaching grounds for the *Buddhist* learners.<sup>661</sup> Since, the present topic has to deal with the monasticism in indigenous Nepalese *Buddhism* which is also known as *Newār Buddhism*, only old monasteries-*Bāhā* and *Bahi* are being focused here.

### 10.3 General Structure of Nepalese *Buddhist* Monastery

Nothing can be said precisely about the details of *Lichchavī* monasteries as none of them survived today in their pristine form. They must have been destroyed or changed or renovated many times before they came to present form. However, it can be assumed that they must have been simpler as those found in ruins on Nāgarjunakonda, Takṣasila, Orissa in India in contemporary period.

---

<sup>659</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11)

<sup>660</sup> Gurung, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 12)

<sup>661</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 13)

### 10.3.1 Construction base

*Vihāras* extant at present are of medieval construction which must have been based upon *Lichchavī* origin because art and architecture of a place take hundreds of years to develop into a particular form. By the time of early medieval period, the guide-books of *Vihāra* construction like *Kriyāsaṃgraha* and *Kriyāsamuccaya* had already been formed and followed. Nepalese monasteries were known to have been constructed according to the rules and rituals mentioned in the Kuladutta's *Kriyā Saṃgrahapañjikā*, a commentary on the collection of *Buddhist tantric* rituals or *Kriyāsamuccaya*- a ritual hand book. *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā* served as a kind of authorized monastery construction manual. There is an inscription which mentions that *Śākyabhiṣu* Jayalakṣa alias Jayaharsapāla inaugurated the *pratisthā* of the *Jāmbūnada Mahāvihāra* (*Pimkṣe Vihār*) in Kathmandu in 1590 AD, specifying the rituals followed would be as per *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*.<sup>662</sup>

Kuladatta was a Nepalese *Buddhist* master of the period between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century and was a companion of Tathāgatavajra who organized the *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*.<sup>663</sup> All the details starting from the prescription of the choice of a site for a monastery (*bhumiparikṣā*), the preparation of the water jugs employed in consecration ritual (*kalaśādhivāsana*), the casting of cords on the site for a monastery (*sūtrapātanavidhi*), consecration of images and

<sup>662</sup> Reference of Inscription was taken from from D.R. Regmi, *Medieval Nepal* (4 parts), (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1965), Part 4, 27-44, Inscription No. 27 and was used in foot note by Ryugen Tanemura, P. 16. The inscription reads as follows:

evam Vihāraāpratiṣṭhāpitārthaṃ prathamam bhūparigraha-krodhā(23) gnīpūjā-  
\*kumāryarcana(: kumārī, arcana R)-marīcirakṣā-\*śalyaparīkṣa (: śalyoparīkṣā R)-  
bhūmiyācanā-ekāśītikoṣṭhasthadevatāpūjā-yavaropa \*na (= naṃ R ) jāṅguli (24)  
pūjā-kalaśādhivāsana-kīlak \*āropaṇa(= ālopanaṃ R)-sūtrapāta\*na(=naṃR)-  
vāstupar\*ī(=īR)kṣa-sandhiparīkṣā-  
bhūmikhandaṇḍapādasthāpanaparyatānāṃyathākri(25)yāsaṃgrahaśāstrokṭakrama\*parip  
ātena(for paripātyā) pṛthak pṛthak pūjāhomādikaṃ kṛtvā asmin jāmbūnadam  
Mahāvihāraṃ pādasthāpitaṃ bhava\*tu (=tuḥ R).(26)tadanantaram(=tadantaraR)-  
gavākṣasthāpa\*na(=naṃR)-śīrodārūsthāpana -paryantānāṃ yathāvidhivat karma  
kṛtvā varṣaika(27) na saṃpūrṇaṃ bha\*vatu(= vantu R). nepa\*la(= le R)saṃvatsare  
nā e dvi(712) vaisākha kṛṣṇapakṣe saptamyaṃ tithau śravaṇanakṣatre somavāsare  
asmin dine idaṃ (28) viha\*ra(= raṃ R) śṛṅghal\*āvarohanaṇaṃ(= āvalohanaṃ R)  
bhavatu. śre(= śrī R)yo 'stu.

<sup>663</sup> Tanemura, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 299), Pp. 5-9

other objects of worship (*pratimādipratisthā*) etc. were done as per rules and rituals mentioned in the text and indicated by the inscription mentioned above. In the process, *vajradhātu maṇḍala* is visualized upon which a *vihāra* is constructed. In *Sūtrapātan*, the land is divided into 81 cells where various gods and goddesses are invoked, seated, and worshipped. The main cell is meant for the main deity of the *vihāra*. Contents of *Kriyā-Saṁgrahapañjikā* bear similarity with other known ritual texts like *Kriyāsamuccaya*, *Vajrāvalī*, and *Sarvavajrodaya*.

### 10.3.2 Outlook of a *vihāra* at a glance

A *vihāra* is a quadrangular edifice from outside with tiled roofs. Both frame structure and wall structures were used in *Newār vihāra* construction. Wall structure is visible from outside while frame structure prevails inside. Only woods, bricks, and mud are found to have been used for the construction. Outer coating was done by ‘*vajra*’- paste mixture of baked brick powder and lime. The artistic decoration was entirely *Newār* style which display craftsmanship and skillful creativity. Foundation structure and ground floor plan are in concomitant to old *vihārs* like those found in vestige in Takṣaśīla, Nāgarjunakondā, Nālandā etc. Upper floors exhibit Nepaleseness with indigenous features like wooden lattice windows.<sup>664</sup> *Vihāra* made were earthquake resistance as most of them survived in 1934 devastating earthquake. Besides, other details in decoration vary according to the type of the monastery. The following pictures help in understanding typical structure of Nepalese monastery.

---

<sup>664</sup> For photograph, please see appendix



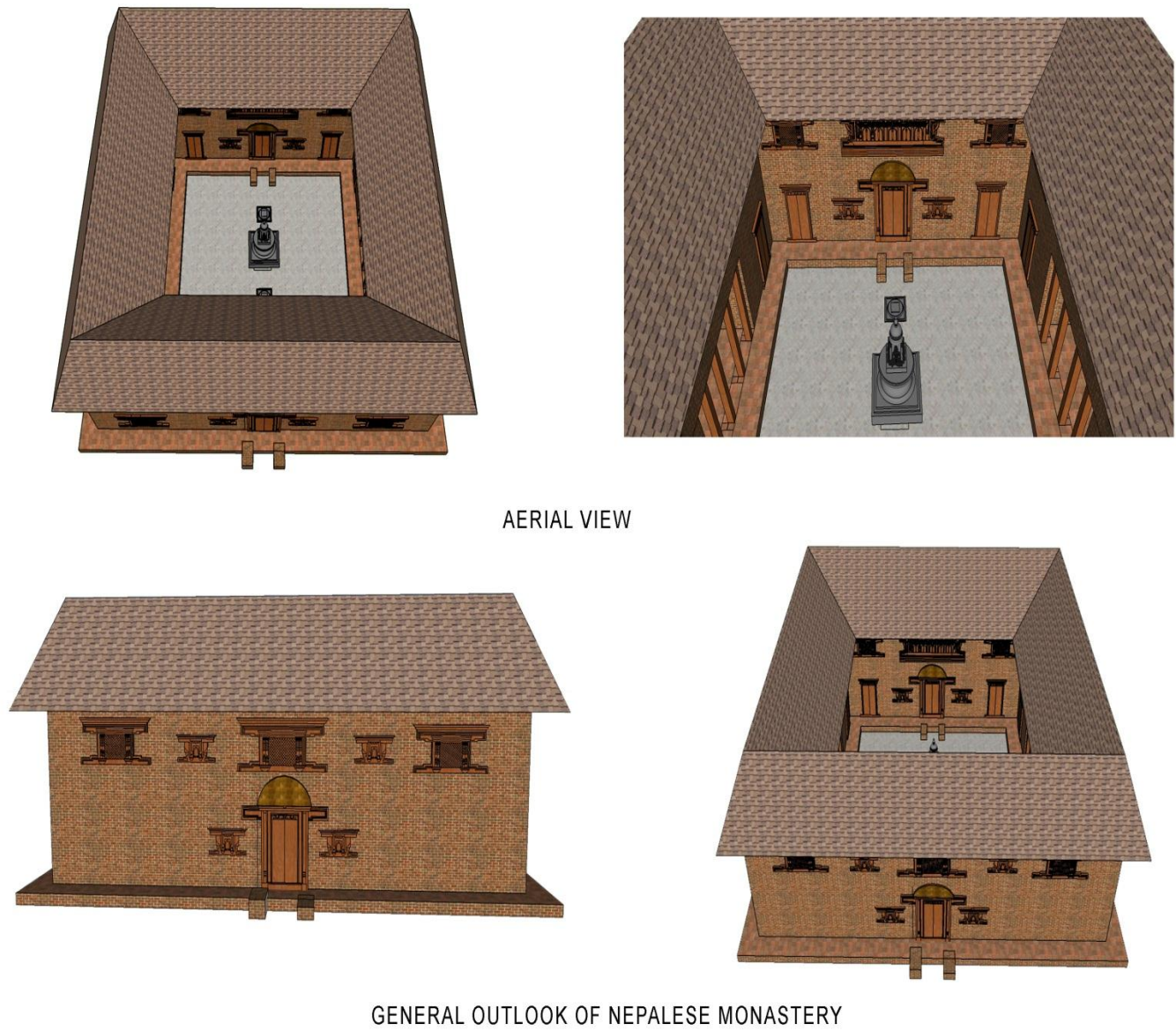


Fig. 6 Sketches showing General Outlook of Nepalese monastery

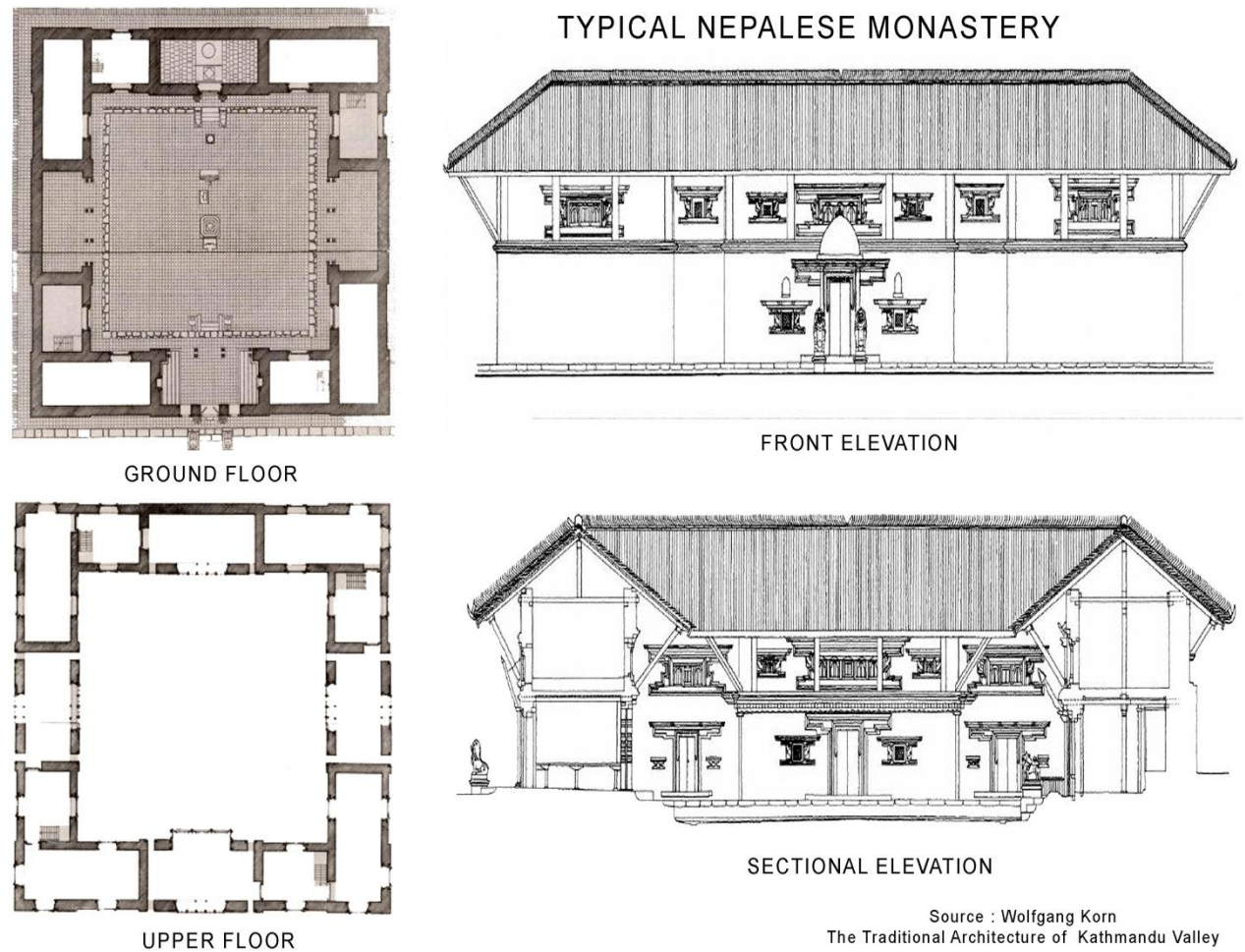


Fig. 7 Sketches showing Typical Nepalese monastery

### 10.3.3 Description

Structurally a *vihāra* has remained unaltered for centuries. It is believed that the basic plan for the layout of the monastery remained same for more than two thousand years as proved by studying the well preserved rock monasteries at Ajantā and Ellorā in the Western India.<sup>665</sup> *Vihāras* in Kathmandu valley while on one hand preserved the ancient features turned into *Buddhist* characteristic of the country with definite indigenous architectural features which is unique to the

<sup>665</sup> Korn, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 109), P. 26

buddhistic ways of life. The *Vihāra* or monastery is laid out in traditional *Buddhist* style according to a quadrangular plan with an open courtyard in the middle. It is often set back from the road in a courtyard, so that one has to pass through a door to get to it. The *Buddhist* monastery is usually a two-storied court style building made up of mud, bricks and wood. A typical *Bāhā*, which is similar to those mentioned in any relevant texts has images of *Mahānkāla* and *Ganeśa*, two protective deities, positioned as guards on either sides of the entrance to the *Bāhā*.<sup>666</sup>

The monastery remains inclusive of all requisites needed for *Dharma* practice and its propagation. It functions as the focus of the attached *Saṅgha*, housing its deities and shrine rooms and providing space for rituals and other cultic activities. In all monasteries of the Kathmandu Valley in Nepal, two themes recur consistently in their architecture, that are also significant in the religious practices of *Newār Buddhism*. The monasteries always stood on the *Dharmadhātu Maṇḍalā* and there is always representation of the *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* (in the form of *caitya*). In Lalitpur, monasteries include *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* and *Dharmadhātu Maṇḍalā* physically in the courtyard. *Svayambhū* is the most sacred monument in the *Newār Buddhist* community and serves as the ontological source of the religion, as indicated by textual evidence and ritual practices. In the middle of the court, one can find an ancient *caitya* belonging to the monastery, the symbol of *Svayambhū* representing the ultimate reality of the world, which is the most essential part of a *Newār* Monastery. The presence of a secondary surrogate of *Svayambhū*, found in the courtyards of virtually every monastery, further suggests that *Svayambhū Mahācaitya* is the generating source of the *Buddhist* environment of the Valley. There can be other *caityas* too installed by the individual members. Near by the main *caitya* stands *Dharmadhātu maṇḍalā* surmounted by a *vajra*. *Dharmadhātu* is the representation of the purified universe as directly perceived by the *Buddhas* and *Bodhisattvas*. The courtyard of the monastery served the purpose of assembly ground for the practitioners and followers and display of *Buddhist* articles in occasions. On the four sides of the courtyard there stand two storied buildings. One side of the courtyard opposite to the entrance may have distinctly recognizable multi-storied building with pinnacle or *cupolā* on the rooftop, which houses the main deity. It generally houses in the ground floor a large *Buddha* image. The main

---

<sup>666</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 26

deity seated on a lotus throne is usually the big statue of *Śākyamuni Buddha*, with earth touching gesture. Occasionally he may be other form of *Buddhist* deities like *Dīpaṅkar* or *Avlokiteśwar*. In the ground floor besides main deity image, there are rooms for display of *Buddhist* articles in occasions, long rooms for *Dharma* teaching or preaching and in the first floor rooms for further extensive practice of *Dharma*, storeroom and living quarters of the monastics etc.<sup>667</sup>

The most important part in the first floor is an enclosed secret room or shrine where *Tantric* deity (*āgandyāh*), most commonly *Cakrasamvara* and his consort *Vajravarāhi* are installed along with other subordinate deities. The *Tantric* shrine (*āgaṃ*) is either directly above the main principal deity or on the first floor room opposite to the it or it can also be to one side of the first floor. Attached to *Tantric* shrine is an esoteric chamber, *Digi* which further provides the provision for *Vajrayānā* practice in the monastery. *Dikṣā*, locally called *Dekhā*, the formal initiation into *Vajrayānā yogatantra* is held from time to time in this chamber for those who want to enter *Vajrayānā* way of *Buddhist* practice. In the ground space between the image of the main deity and *caitya* is a *yajnāsāla*, one foot square fire place where sacrifices are offered during worship.<sup>668</sup>

From 18<sup>th</sup> century, no new monastery has been built of a similar description. Many of the buildings within the monasteries started to change their appearance and many of them were completely remodeled, leaving only a few today in their original form. Therefore, the majority of the monasteries still existing today have been either extensively modified for residential purposes, have fallen into disrepair or have become unrecognizable. No monastery is to be found outside the limits of the city cores. All have been surrounded by residential houses. Where monasteries were found within the city, the Toles around them bear their names indicating to the popularity of the monasteries in those areas. *Bāhās* like *Te-bāhā*, *Dwākā bāhā* and *Bahils* such as *Cābahil* and *Maru Bahil* provide clear examples of lending their names to the localities. Many *bahis* are in the state of collapse. Although in bad state of repair *Pintu bahi* preserves the most typical architectural features of *Bahi*. Recently, a traditional *Newār vihāra* is under construction at Lumbini. Even at this age of 21<sup>st</sup> century, the same old methods and rules are being followed in the construction.

<sup>667</sup> Please see photograph in the Appendix

<sup>668</sup> For a cursory look into other details of monastery, please refer to the Chart No. 2 in Appendix

#### 10.4 Sacredness of the Monastery

Though originally built to shelter monks during rainy season, the *Buddhist* monastery took on a sacred character when small stupas and images of the *Buddha* were installed within it.<sup>669</sup> The *vihāra* in Nepalese context is visualized sacred from the very selection of the site for its construction when rituals are performed turning it into abode of numerous *Buddhist* deities. According to *Kriyāsaṅgraha Pañjikā*, the proposed ground for *vihāra* construction should be visualized as the *Vajradhātu Maṇḍala*. During consecration of the ground, one hundred and twenty one deities are worshipped. Forty goddesses, in sets of ten, are positioned towards the four cardinal points, and eighty one deities are positioned in eighty one selected spots (*Koṣṭhaka*) divided into five groups. The group of forty goddesses includes the ten *Bhumis*, the ten *Pāramitās*, the ten *Vasitas*, and the ten *Dhāranis*. The host consisting of eighty one deities includes forty nine deities from the *Vajradhātu Maṇḍala* (*Vairocana*, four *Buddha* goddesses, sixteen *Vajrasattvas*, sixteen *Bodhisattvas*, eight goddesses of offerings, and four door guardians) *Vajrahūmkāra* and the *Krodhas*, the nine planets, the ten *Lokapālas*, *Prithvi* and *Nāga*. All these deities are duly visualized and are worshipped with their *mantra*. After the purification the *vihāra* site is visualized as the *Vajradhātu Maṇḍala* and worships are made.

*Kwāpādyo* shrine and *āgaṃ* are full of *Buddhist* deities. Therefore, they are holy sanctums having significant spirituality. *Buddhist* deities in various art forms like sculptures, paintings installed in a monastery are not only the aesthetic objects but are sacred too adding to the spirituality. The *Newār Buddhist* monasteries have at least one and usually many *caityas*. *Caitya* is the integral part of the monastery. It is regarded as the abode of *Pañca-Buddha* whose images are depicted on its four sides, and whose forms have gone through long and complex architectural and iconographic evolution. Previously, when *caityas* were not included in the monastery, the main part of the monastery was the assembly hall (*upatthānasāla* in *Pāli*, *upasthānśālā* in *Saṃskṛit*). With the introduction of *caitya* in monastery, *Upatthānaśālā* was ignored.<sup>670</sup>

<sup>669</sup> Encyclopaedia Britannica, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 45), Vol. 7, P. 8

<sup>670</sup> Nagao, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 626), P. 195



Sacredness of a *Vihāra* is maintained by its inhabitant *Saṅgha* members and practicing the *Dharma* by following a set of prescribed rules and regulations, synonymously known as *Vinaya* or *prācīmokṣya*. Actually, monasticism comprises of the activities exercised and exhibited by the *Saṅgha* members in a monastery towards the practice and propagation of the *Dharma*. Nepalese *Buddhists* have been following the same age-old tradition and the existence of numerous old monasteries is the indicative of the fact that Kathmandu valley is the strong hold of the *Buddhists*. *Buddhists* masters and *ācāryas* mostly dwell surrounding the monastery. They preach *Dharma* discourse, teach *Dharma* lessons and provide guidance to the lay followers. The lay followers throng into the nearby monastery for earning merit by listening to *Buddhist* masters or *ācāryas*, worshipping the *Buddhist* deities etc. The monastery is also the centre of *Dharma* practice by the fully ordained *Buddhist* initiates, their socio-cultural accomplishment and teaching learning activities. All these chores along with monasteries concerned make up monasticism. So, a monastery occupies vital pivoted position in the *Buddhist* tradition for the formation of *Saṅgha* besides its use as lodging for *Buddhist* masters, place for socio-cultural activities and spiritual practice.

The architecture of the *Newār Buddhist* monastery is such that it has three shrines (i) first, the shrine of the main deity, who explicitly stands for the *Śrāvakyāna* part of *Newār Buddhism*, (ii) second, the shrine of the *Bodhisattva* like *Amoghapāsa Lokeśwara*, *Padmapāni Lokeśwara* or *Tārā* and decoration with their paintings and statues along with other *Mahāyānist* deities represent *Mahāyāna* part and (iii) third, tantric shrine, the *āgaṃ* with the esoteric deities *Vajrāyāna* part.<sup>671</sup> In addition there are frequently symbols like the struts with many armed *tantric* forms of the five *Buddhas* or the five protective deities (*Sāadhanā*) which may be given a diamond way interpretation.<sup>672</sup> Thus, the *Śrāvakyāna* activity has been put in a *Mahāyāna* framework in a typical *Newārī Buddhist* style in the *Newār* monastery.<sup>673</sup> This also reflects the hierarchy of three vehicles.

Furthermore, this structure of three ways is built into *Newār Buddhist* tradition and in particular to the sequence whereby a young *Vajrācārya* passes first through monastic initiation, then becomes a householder, and finally undergoes the

<sup>671</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 292

<sup>672</sup> *Ibid*, P. 186

<sup>673</sup> *Ibid*,

consecration of a *vajra* master. All these activities are centred at the monastery. On the traditional *Newār Buddhist* view, then all three ways were taught by the *Buddha*; the difference between them are explained by the fact that the *Buddha* adapted his message to the capacities and needs of his listeners.<sup>674</sup> Therefore, the monastery is not only home to the *saṅgha* members, and centre of their religious activities, it is also abode of deities belonging to three different vehicles of *Buddhism*. Hence, it is a sacred place.

Everyday in the early morning main deity and other deities are kept open for daily worship after the deity and the shrines have been cleaned and worshipped by the *Dyopālā*, the in charge and his assistants. The in charge person changes rotationally turn by turn as per the rule of the *Saṅgha* of the monastery. In most of the *Vihāras*, *Mahāyānā sūtras* are generally recited in the morning. Except on special days doors of the shrine rooms are kept closed at daytime. In the evening, prayers are made with the butter lamps lighted up before the doors of the *vihārs* and deities. *Dharmagandī* is beaten and the monastery is circumambulated by the attendant holding lit incense at hand and ringing the bell. While doing such activities, the serving attendants have to bare his right hand giving the gesture of *cīvara*.

### 10.5. Social Connectivity of *Newār* Monastery

The structure of Nepalese *Buddhist* monastery as a whole seems to have been constructed to accommodate different kinds of *Buddhist* people. The underlying intention is apparent not only to lodge the monastics but also the lay followers' group. *Vihāra* architecture in Nepal was designed from the very early period to maintain several activities that promoted *Vihāra* culture and monasticism. The *Vihāras* were centres of religion, education and cultural activities in the Medieval period. The main monastic shrine is annexed through a passage called *Lācchi* to inner courtyards called *Nani*. A proper *nani* is courtyard with houses around it and generally a *caitya* in the centre.<sup>675</sup> But it normally does not have *kwāpā-dyo* and *āgaṃ*. It also gives an impression of *bāhā*, when it contains *kwāpādyo* and in this case it is called *Nani-bāhā*. But, *nanis* are often called *nani-bāhā* in Bhaktapur even though they do not have *kwāpādyo*. Along the *Lācchi* on both sides, are the residential buildings of lay followers mainly farmers known as *Jyāpu*. They are

<sup>674</sup> *Ibid*, P. 114

<sup>675</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 6

burly men who can undertake any laborious jobs in performing regular *Buddhist* activities. Along the four sides of the rectangular *Nani* are the houses of those members of the *Saṅgha*, who are not accommodated in the main monastery and its branches. It may also have houses of other castes apart from *Bare*. The *Nani* may be connected by a narrow passage to other squares of area called *Chuka* where different kind of lay followers like *Chitrakār*, *Tulādhār*, *Ranjit* etc. reside. The establishment of *vihāras* and the settlements of monastics would no doubt have attracted settlers such as cultivators, artisans, among others, whose services for the institution are required. There can be cluster of more than one *Lācchi*, *Nani* and *Chuka* around the Monastery. Thus, the *Newār Buddhist* monastery mostly remains diffused in the settlements due to its integration into the surrounding architecture and becomes externally inconspicuous.<sup>676</sup>

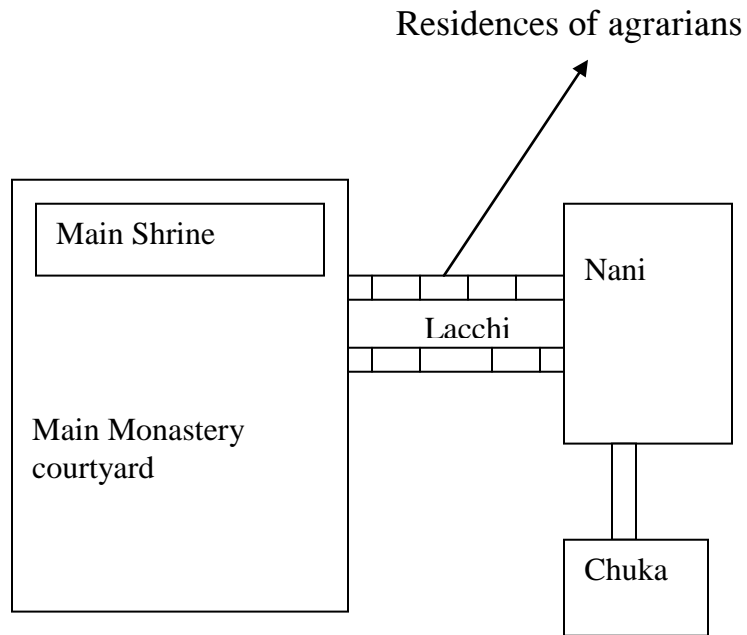


Figure 8. General Spatial planning of the Nepalese Monastery

There are a few another types of *Buddhist* courtyards which might be called an extended *bāhā* complex: a very large courtyard (almost as large as a playground as football field) surrounded by residential buildings with a *bāhā* shrine situated along

<sup>676</sup> Korn, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 109), P. 26



one side.<sup>677</sup> The courtyard is usually replete with images and *caityas*. Perhaps the best examples of this is *Kayagu nani* of *Itum bāhā*, and *Te bāhā* in Kathmandu and *Bu bāhā*, *Nāg bāhā* and *Nyākhā cuka* in Patan. So, the general structure of the monastery also gives us the clue to conclude that *Buddhism* in Nepal is not only for the monks and nuns or the priestly class but it is also for the lay people and it has been practiced through generations by them.

Besides intra-social-connectivity of the monastery, there are inter-connections among the monasteries of an area. As mentioned above, such connections were once utilized in demarcation of the territories of the state in medieval period. Lalitpur was divided into *Uttara vihāra* area, *Dakṣin vihāra* area, and *Pim bāhāl* (*vihāra*) areas which were ruled by separate feudal heads, *Mahāpātras*. Similarly, Kāntipur was divided into four separate regions called ‘*Pui*’ according to grouping of the monasteries. Such connections are still seen physically and working pattern during ‘*Pui Ācā Gu*’ (regional gathering).<sup>678</sup> *Kacā Bāhās* are mostly clustered around the principal monastery with which they are affiliated or associated. Interconnection among the monasteries is based on such a territorial architectural design that it facilitates not only the annual gathering of *saṅgha* members but also one of the important practice of *Newār Buddhists* called *Bāhā pūjā*. During its celebration, all the *Bāhā* and *bahi* monasteries are visited and worshipped by the *Buddhists* including monastics, and lay followers (*Upāsaka* and *Upāsika*). Also, the monastic functions held at one monastery are witnessed by the *saṅgha* members of neighbouring monasteries. There can be several examples to reveal interrelation among the monasteries of one locality. The below given a piece of map from Patan that gives a picture of connection among them.

---

<sup>677</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.*(f.n. 11), P. 5

<sup>678</sup> *Pui* arrangement is discussed in separate paragraph below.



Fig. 9. A map showing a cluster of monasteries in a locality with Patan Durbar at the centre (Map Source: Nippon institute of technology, 'The Buddhist monasteries of Nepal' – a Project Report on Renovation of Rajkīrti Mahāvihār, 1998)

#### 10.6 Working pattern of *Saṅgha* members in the monastery

All the people dwelling in and around the monastery have specific role to play in the *Buddhist* activities of the monastery. They work together and perform their duties through their particular working pattern known as *Guṭhī* (Cooperative body). *Guṭhī* is the term used to denote a social institution that determines the rights and obligations of a *Newār* and his community. Monastic functions are carried out by the means of *Guṭhī* which are formed by the members of several communities residing in and around the monastery. It is *Guṭhī*'s duty to run a monastic complex.<sup>679</sup> The rhythm of the life in the *Saṅgha* of a *Bāhā* is governed by a series of *guṭhīs*. Mostly every *Saṅgha* has the *guṭhī* to carry on monastic activities thus establishing strong relationship between *guṭhī* and monasticism. Mostly *guṭhī* members are also the members of *Saṅgha*. Even the *Saṅgha* of a monastery operates through *guṭhīs* whose functions are to look after the monastery and provide for the prescribed worship of the *Kwāpādyo* and *āgaṃ* deities to smoothly run a monastic complex. The rigid and uniform disciplines (of *Buddhism*) were applied only to monks; lay society was too diverse and too supple and escaped their influence. Nonetheless, as Sylvian Levy and David Gellner pointed out it as a hypothesis worth considering that *Buddhism* did have some influence on lay life

<sup>679</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 248

and that pervasiveness of *guthī* organization among the *Newārs* owes something to the importance of *Buddhist* monasticism in their history.<sup>680</sup> The concept of *Guthī* i.e. working together in group among *Newārs* perhaps might have evolved from *Buddhist Saṅgha*, which exhibited togetherness forming a community. All the initiated members of the *Saṅgha* comprise the *guthīyārs* and the rights and duties of each are regulated by the elders. There are three ways of functioning of *guthī* by *guthī* members. Members of *guthī* may work on seniority basis, or rotation basis or territorial basis. Mostly each monastery has some land registered with the government *guthī* office, the income from which is used for their services in the shrine and to finance their feast and festivals. Office and duties within the *Saṅgha* are allotted on the principle of seniority of initiation. The head of the *Saṅgha* or *thakāli* is the seniormost initiated member of the *Saṅgha*. This is due to this special mode of working together through *Guthī* that even ancient *Buddhist* culture is still observed in Kathmandu valley.

### 10.7 Distributional pattern and Organization of Monasteries

According to territorial basis, the monasteries in *Nepal-maṇḍala* can be categorized into three groups. (1) Kāntipur (2) Lalitpur including Kīrtipur (Kathmandu) (3) Bhaktapur including Madhyapur (Thimi). There are altogether 332 *vihāras* (*Bāhā* and *Bahī*) in the Kathmandu excluding those outside 1 in Sānkhu, 1 in Banepā, 2 in Panauti, 1 in Khampu, 1 in Nālā, and 1 in Dolakhā.<sup>681</sup> Monasteries are listed 120 in Kathmandu, and 167 in Lalitpur.<sup>682</sup> It is about 25 in Bhaktapur and 9 in Thimi. However, listing differs slightly according to the scholars because there are some degenerated or defunct monasteries which might or might not have been counted.

#### 10.7.1 In Kāntipur

There is dominating concept and presence of eighteen principal monasteries with their branches, ten purely main *Śākyabāhās* with their branches and sixteen *bahis*, among the listed 120 monasteries of Kāntipur. The number of main *Bāhās* always remained constant at eighteen even though there can be new *Bāhās* added by new

<sup>680</sup> *Ibid*, P. 250

<sup>681</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), Pp. 27-8

<sup>682</sup> Hemraj Sakya, *Nepal Baudha Vihāra wa Granthasūci (Nepal Buddhist Monasteries and Enlistment of Scriptures)*, (Kathmandu: Dharmodaya Sabha, Buddha samvat 2500), Pp.5-19

construction. Otherwise there are 45 main *vihāras* (18 affiliated to *ācāryagṛhī* and 27 others) in Kathmandu.<sup>683</sup>

Each monastery has its own *Saṅgha*. It is believed that all principal monasteries had *vajrācārya* monastics only. But, as some members could not undertake *ācāryāviśeka*, they remained only as *Śākya*. Therefore, some *Saṅgha* had only *Vajrācārya* members while others have mixed members containing both *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* members. These eighteen principal monasteries and other monasteries were distributed in four regions from north to south and each region has one separate greater *Saṅgha* called *Pui Ācā Gu*. The regions are called *Pui*. All the eighteen monasteries are associated with national umbrella *Saṅgha*, *De Ācā Gu*.

#### 10.7.1.1 Organization of *Pui* (consolidated areas), and its monasteries

(a) *Thatu Pui*, Apical portion in the north, equivalent to *Suvarṇapari Mahānagar*. This region had the following principal monasteries:

S.No.	Name of Monastery	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>	<i>Saṅgha</i> composition	Site
1	<i>Kwā bāhā</i>	<i>Maitripur or Maitripurna Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Thahiti</i>
2	<i>Nhu bāhā</i> <sup>684</sup> or <i>Jwā- bāhā</i>	<i>Ratnaketu or Ratnacaitya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Thāyamadu or Thahiti</i>
3	<i>Dhwākā bāhā</i>	<i>Henakara Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Tyauda</i>
4	<i>Gam bāhā</i>	<i>Hemvarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Naghal Tole</i>

Table 3. Four principal Monasteries within *Thatu Pui*.

<sup>683</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 27

<sup>684</sup> Though *Jwā bāhā* and *Nhu bāhā* (*New Jwā bāhā*) are separately placed two different monasteries, they are associated with each other and so are treated as one. *Nhu bāhā* is regarded as extension of *Jwābāhā*. The main deity of *Jwā bāhā* when lost after theft was found at the site where *Nhu bāhā* is situated. Its replica had been already installed and consecrated at the main *Jwā bāhā*. Due to this reason, monastics of *Jwā bāhā* have to be initiated (taking *Pravajyā*) at *Nhu bāhā* in front of their original deity. For other details please refer Ratnakaji Bajracharya and Vijayaratna Bajracharya, *Nepā:deyā Vihārayā Tā:chā- Key to Vihāras in Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Ratnakaji, Vijayaratna Bajracharya, 1983), Pp. 77-78

Founder of the main monasteries in ‘*Thane Pui*’ is believed to be Vakvajra. The four main monasteries of *Thane Pui* has about 500 *saṅgha* members. Besides, there are other monasteries like *Karuṇapur Mahāvihāra* (*Musyā Bāhā*), *Guṇākar Mahāvihāra* (*Chusyā Bāhā*), *Triratnaketu vihāra* (*Jwā Bāhā*), *Shantighata Mahāvihāra* (*Srigha Bāhā*), *Ratnamandal Mahāvihāra* (*Nagha Bāhā*), *Karṇaketu Mahāvihāra* (*Cā Bāhā*, *Nhāyankan tole*), *Gautamsri Mahāvihāra* (*Dhalsiko Bāhā*, *Tyauda*), *Harshacaitya Mahāvihāra* (*Haku Bāhā*, *Asan*), *Sri Asok Vriksa Mahāvihāra* (*Kwathu Nani*, *Asan*), *Bodhiprasthan Vihāra* (*Inu Bāhā*, *Kamalāchi*, *Nayatwa*), *Tun Vihāra* (*Tun Bāhā*, *Tyaudha*), *Stanmandap Vihāra* (*Thāyamadu Bāhā*), *Nani Bāhā* (*Kamalachi*, *Ason*), *Khā Bāhā* (*Jyāthā*), *Swa Bāhā* (*Swabhā Bhagavati sthān*), *Khya Bāhā* (behind *Musyā Bāhā*), and *Bhagavati Bāhā* (*Thahiti*)

(b) ***Dathu Pui***, Middle portion, equivalent to *Aśokamandap Mahānagar*

The principal monasteries and their *saṅgha* composition of this region are:

S.No.	Name of Monastery	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>	<i>Saṅgha</i> Composition	Site
5	<i>Takṣe-bāhā</i>	<i>SuratŚrī Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Asan</i>
6	<i>Jana-bāhā</i>	<i>Kanakcaitya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākyas</i>	<i>Kel Tole</i>
7	<i>Itum-bāhā</i>	<i>Keshachandrakrita paravarta Bhāskardeva-sanskarita Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Kilaghal</i>
8	<i>Mū-bāhā</i>	<i>MulŚrī Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Ranjanā Galli Tole</i>
9	<i>Saval-bāhā</i>	<i>Mantrasiddhi Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākyas</i>	<i>Guccā Tole</i>
10	<i>Makhan-bāhā</i>	<i>Ratnakirti Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākyas</i>	<i>Makhan Tole</i>
11	<i>Te-bāhā</i>	<i>Rājikirti Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Te bāhāl, Sankatā</i>

Table 4. Seven principal Monasteries within *Dathu Pui*

Suratvajra is believed to be the founder of the monasteries of ‘*Dathu Pui*’. The *Dathu Pui* having seven principal monasteries has more than 800 *saṅgha* members. Besides above mentioned principal monasteries, this *Pui* also encloses the following monasteries- *Ashoksri Mahāvihāra* (*Dhwākāsi Bāhā*, Kamalāchi), *Maitri Karuṇā Dharmacakra Mahāvihāra* (*Jamo Bāhā*), *Sri Rangbhuvan Mahāvihāra* (*Dagu Bāhā*, Bhotāhiti), *Asokcaitya Mahāvihāra* (*Asan Bāhā*), *Uku Mahāvihāra* (*Asan Bāhā*), *Mahābaudha Mahāvihāra* (*Mahābu Bāhā*), *Asoka Caitya Vihāra* (*Mahābu Bāhā*), *Yogasāadhan Mahāvihāra* (*Ta:khachen Bāhā*, Keltol), *Dharmacakra Mahāvihāra* (*Tārā Bāhā*, *Itum bāhā*), *Sarasvati Mahāmanjusri Vihāra* (*Sasu nani*), *Kutum Vihāra* (*Kutu nani*), *Asokmandap Vihāra* (*Kayagan nani*), *Dhawal Caitya Vihāra* (*Dhanaju Caitya*, *Dui Bāhā*), *Italankhu Parāvarta Mahāvihāra* (*Arakhu bahi*, *Syasya Bāhā*, *Nyata*), *Italakhu Parāvarta vihāra* (*Mahanka bahi*), *Muktipur Mahāvihāra* (*Mukum bahi*, *Yatkhaḡalli*), *Bhāskarkirti Mahāvihāra* (*Yatkha Bāhā*), *Dhanasingh Bāhā*, *Yatkha*, *Ratnākar Mahāvihāra* (*Tamuga Bāhā*), *Siddhinagar Mahāvihāra* (*Soh Bāhā*, *Nyata*), *Rājikirti Mahāvihāra* (*Makhan bahi*), *Tutaksam Mahāvihāra* (*Tunchen Bāhā*, *Makhangalli*), *Asokriti Vihāra* (*Bhujin Bāhā*, *Phisikebha*), *Dharmacakra Mahāvihāra* (*Watu Bāhā*), *Jambunandan Mahāvihāra* (*Piksa Bāhā*, *Khu Bāhā*, *Watu*), *Jinaudhwār Mahāvihāra* (*Chidhaun Bāhā*, *Wotu*), *Dharmacakra Darshan Mahāvihāra* (*Tadhaun Bāhā*, *Watu*), *Dashavala Mahāvihāra* (*Wanta Bāhā*, *Saval*), *Vandukrita Mahāvihāra* (*Bhosiko Bāhā*), *Asok Caitya Vihāra* (*Pyukhā Bāhā*), *Sadkseri Mahāvihāra* (*Dugambahi*), *Sadkseri Mahāvihāra* (*Dugambahi*), *Sankarkīrti Mahāvihāra* (*Nasān Bāhā*), *Iksāmati Bāhā* (*Bhrikutimandap Tukuchā*), *Dagu Bāhā* (*Guccā tole*).

(c) *Lāyaku Pui*, Durbar square portion, equivalent to *Kāsthamandap Mahānagar*  
The region has only one main monastery.

S.No.	Name of Monastery	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>	<i>Saṅgha</i> Composition	Site
12	<i>Sikhomu-bāhā</i>	<i>Srikhandā TarumulMahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākyas</i>	<i>Basantpur</i>

Table 5. The only Principal Monastery of *Lāyaku Pui*

Lilāvajra was the founder of *Sikhomu-bāhā* of *Lāyaku Pui*. *Sikhomu Bāhā*, the only principal monastery of *Lāyaku Pui* comprises more than 600 *saṅgha* members. Other monasteries situated in *Lāyaku Pui* are *Rajkirti Manoram Mahāvihāra* (*Kumārī Bāhā*), *Srinaka Mahāvihāra* (*Lāyeku Bahi*), *Kāṣṭhamandap Mahāvihāra*, *Śākyaketu Mahāvihāra* (*Maru Bahi*), *Des Smantrab Mahāvihāra* (*Basantpur Bāhā*), *Vasundhara Kriti Mahāvihāra* (*Jhochhen Bāhā*) and *Sukhāvati Manoram Mahāvihāra* (*Chyāsapā Bāhā*), *Kṛṣṇagupta Mahāvihāra* (*Chyāsāpākva Bāhā*), *Parvachandan Mahāvihāra* (*Punche Bāhā*, Chikanmuga), *Guhyekuksa Mahāvihāra* (Chitramakut, Chikanmuga), *Dharma Yashodhar Mahāvihāra* (*Nhu Bāhā*), *Varsa chandanb Mahāvihāra* (*Dhyākusi Bāhā*, Chikanmuga). They are mostly associated to *Sikhomu Bāhā*.

(d) ***Kwathu Pui or Kvane Pui***, the posterior or lower portion, equivalent to *Manjupattan Mahānagar*.

It has the following six principal monasteries.

S.No.	Name of Monastery	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>	<i>Saṅgha</i> composition	Site
1	<i>Om-bāhā</i>	<i>Brahmachakra Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Om bāhāl</i>
2	<i>Iku-bāhā</i>	<i>Vajraśila Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Yangāl tole</i>
3	<i>Mikhā-bāhā</i>	<i>Mani Saṅgha Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>MajuŚrī Tole</i>
4	<i>Lagan-bāhā</i>	<i>Kirtipunya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākyas</i>	<i>Lagan Tole</i>
5	<i>Mushum-bāhā</i> (1)	<i>Mani Saṅgha Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Musum bāhā (Jāpātun)</i>
6	<i>Mushum-bāhā</i> (2)	<i>Manisinha Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Musum bāhā (Exterior)</i>

Table 6. Principal Monasteries within *Dathu Pui*

The patron of *Kvane Pui* was Manjuvajra. There are more than 600 *saṅgha* members scattered in six principal monasteries of this Pui section. Other

monasteries in *Kwathu Pui* are *Bhuvadeva Mahāvihāra* (Pode Bāhā), *Mimnaka Mahāvihāra* (Mimnani Bāhā, Balampu), *Manjuṣṛinaka Mahāvihāra* (Bikamā Bāhā), *Rudranandak Mahāvihāra* (Wanta Bāhā), *Ratnapur Mahāvihāra* (Ganchanani), *Amitkānti Mahāvihāra* (Twākeva Bāhā), *Ratnākar Mahāvihāra* (Gathinani), *Samya vyuhan Mahāvihāra* (Lakhe Simā Bāhā), *Khoi Tanak Mahāvihāra* (Na:bahi), *Dharmadhyāyan Mahāvihāra* (Bahichā Bāhā, Nabahi), *Parvachanda Mahāvihāra* (Punche Bāhā), *Dharmākar Mahāvihāra* (Bhwam Bāhā, Om Bāhā), *Sthānavimba Mahāvihāra* (Thānā Bāhā), *Samanttasri Mahāvihāra* (SoBāhā), *Brahmacakra Mahāvihāra* (BhoteBāhā), *Varsa Chandan Mahāvihāra* (Baku Bāhā, Dwākā), *Chaitanya Mahāvihāra* (Chivānani, JyāBāhā), *Parvachandan Mahāvihāra* (KhālcheBāhā), *Nāgchanda Mahāvihāra* (Jyā Bāhā), *Suvarṇa Pranāli Jetvan Mahāvihāra* (Jyā Bāhā), *Gagan Sangam Mahāvihāra* (Gana Bāhā), *Vajradhātu Mahāvihāra* (Vanta Bāhā), *Siddhivar Mahāvihāra* (Na: Bāhā, Gophal), *Vajradhātu Mahāvihāra* (Bahuchā Bāhā, Dathunani), *Kīrtipunya Vajradhātu Mahāvihāra* (Ta Bāhā), *Kīrtipunya Bhuvan Sundar Mahāvihāra* (Yeta Bāhā, Gophal), *Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra* (Nhyāyakan bahi), *Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra* (Chwākan bahi), *Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra* (Dhana Bāhā), *Ratnākar Mahāvihāra* (Konsa Bāhā, Hyumat), *Ratnākar Mahāvihāra* (Tukan Bāhā, Hyumat), *Parvachandan Mahāvihāra* (Pikhā Bāhā, Brahmutol), *Parvachandan Mahāvihāra* (Pikhanani), *Nadisangam Rajkritya Mahāvihāra* (Yo Bāhā, Kohiti), *Dharmachakra Mahāvihāra* (Dharmacakra Bāhā, Brahmutol), *Asok Caitya Vihāra* (Ta nani Bāhā), *Dīpankar Mahābaudha Mahāvihāra* (Dipankar Bāhā, Buddhabāri), *Chintāmani Vajrakuldip Mahāvihāra* (Kuldip Bāhā, Teku Duvan), *Nadisangam Mahāvihāra* (Khusibahi), *Sawal Bāhā* (Inākhā), *Vichche Bāhā* (Bhimsensthān), and *Bakan Bahi* (Yangal).

The eighteen principal *bāhā* monasteries are associated with the largest organization of *Vajrācārya*, *Ācārya Guṭhī*. Therefore, they are also known as 18 main monasteries of *ācārya Guṭhī*.<sup>685</sup> Of the eighteen, twelve have entirely *Vajrācārya Saṅghas* and six have mixed *Saṅghas* of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*.<sup>686</sup> *Śākya* members of mixed *Saṅgha* are not the members of *Ācārya Guṭhī* though they are the full-fledged members of their *bāhā Saṅgha*.

<sup>685</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), Pp. 253, 336

<sup>686</sup> Six monasteries having mixed *saṅgha* are *Sikhomubāhā*, *Makhan bāhā*, *Itum bāhā*, *Jana bāhā*, *Lagan bāhā* and *Gubhā* (Gam bāhā ?)bāhā



Likewise, there is a group of ten monasteries and sixteen monasteries with *Śākya bhikṣu Saṅghas only* which do not have any functional relation with a group of 18 principal monasteries as mentioned above.

#### 10.7.1.2 The group of ten monasteries-The exclusive *Śākya bāhās*

A group of ten monasteries having only *Śākya Saṅghas* has a separate identity. They are also known as *Śākya bāhās*.<sup>687</sup> *Vajrācāryas* of 18 principal *bāhās* are called upon, when they need the service of a *Vajrācārya* priest. The group of ten monasteries has the following monasteries.

S. No.	Name of <i>Bahi</i> Monastery	Name on <i>Saṅskrit</i>	Place
1	<i>Srigha-bāhā</i>	<i>Śāntighata Caitya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Nagha tole</i>
2	<i>Nagha-bāhā</i>	<i>Ratnamandalā Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Nagha tole</i>
3	<i>Asan-bāhā</i>	<i>Aśokacaitya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Ason</i>
4	<i>Māhābu-bāhā</i>	<i>MahāBuddha Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Mahābaudha</i>
5	<i>Tamu-bāhā</i>	<i>Ratnakara Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Hyumat tole</i>
6	<i>Tadhan-bāhā</i>	<i>Dharmacakra Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Wotu tole</i>
7	<i>Vikamā-bāhā</i>	<i>Manjuśrī naka Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>(Om bāhā tole)</i>
8	<i>Kohiti-bāhā</i>	<i>Kirtipunya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Kohiti, Hyumat tole</i>
9	<i>Ya:ta-bāhā</i>	<i>Kirtipunya Bhuvana Sundara Vihāra</i>	<i>Gophal tole</i>
10	<i>So-bāhā</i>	<i>Dharmadhātu Vihāra</i>	<i>Yangāl tole</i>

Table 7. Ten Monasteries having only *Śākya saṅgha* members

#### 10.7.1.3 *Bahi*- Monasteries

There are theoretically sixteen Monasteries called *bahis* in Kāntipur with the *Saṅgha* there-in, the *Bahi-Saṅgha* or *Bikhu-Bare Saṅgha*. They are scattered from the area of *Cā-bahil* to Teku. *Saṅghas* in some *bahis* are not functional and their rights and privileges are taken by another *Saṅgha*.

The following are the monasteries in the group 16 *Bahis*.<sup>688</sup>

<sup>687</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 336

<sup>688</sup> The four monasteries from No. 1 to 4 have the *saṅgha* members ordained at *Atalakhu* monastery, from No.5 to 7 in *Maru-bahi*, No. 8 to 10 in *Dugan-bahi*, and from No. 11 to 14 in

S. No.	Name of <i>Bahi</i> Monastery	Name in <i>Sanskrit</i>	Place
1	<i>Syangu or Svayambhū Bahi</i>	<i>Jyotikīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Svayambhū</i>
2	<i>Beśa-bahi</i>	<i>Udayagiri or Niligiri Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Bejeśwari</i>
3	<i>Mahānkā or Mākā-bahi</i>		<i>Yatkhā tole near Arakhu Bahi</i>
4	<i>Arakhu or Aialakhu-bahi</i>	<i>Italampukrita(Pārāvata) Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Yatkhā tole</i>
5	<i>Muku-bahi</i>	<i>Muktipur Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Yatkhā, Muku Kewa</i>
6	<i>Gana-bahi</i>	<i>Gaganasangam Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Gana Bāhā</i>
7	<i>Maru-bahi</i>	<i>Śākya ketu Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Maru Tole</i>
8	<i>Khusi-bahi</i>	<i>Nadisangam Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Tāhāchal</i>
9	<i>Kwathu Dugan-bahi</i>	<i>Sadakṣari Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>New Road</i>
10	<i>Dugan-bahi</i>	<i>Sadakṣari Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>New Road</i>
11	<i>Makhan-bahi</i> <sup>689</sup>	<i>Rājakrita Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Makhan tole</i>
12	<i>Nhāyakan-bahi</i>	<i>Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Lagan tole</i>
13	<i>Chwākan-bahi (Kothu)</i>	<i>Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Lagan tole</i>
14	<i>Na:bahi</i>	<i>Udyotakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Nabahi, Jhochhen</i>
15	<i>Cā: bahi</i>	<i>Samādhimandap Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Chavel</i>
16	<i>Kwathu Cā:bahi</i>	<i>Gaganganja Mahāvihāra</i>	<i>Chavel</i>

Table 8. Sixteen *Bahi* Monasteries

*Na:bahi*. *Saṅgha* members of *Cā-bahi* and *Kwathu Ca-bahi* have tradition of initiation at their own monasteries.

<sup>689</sup> *Makhan Bahi* is the most functional *bahi* with active *saṅgha* members.

Though the *Bahi Saṅghas* consist of only the *Śākyas*, their ordination process takes place in presence of *Vajrācārya*.

Among above *Bahis*, *Makhan Bahi* is the most functional and influential *bahi* with active *Saṅgha members*. The members of all of the *bahis* comprise of overall larger *Saṅgha* called *sarva Saṅgha*, the chief *sthvira* of which is always the eldest member of the *Mahāvihāra* of *Makhan Bahi*.

#### 10.7.1.4 *Than Bahi* (*Vikramśīla Mahāvihāra*)

Besides above mentioned monasteries, *Thanbahi* known also by the name *Vikramśīla Mahāvihāra* and locally *Bhāgwān bāhāl* is unique in having no tie in any grouping of monasteries, in being of *Lichchavī* origin and in having *Pradhāns* as *Saṅgha* members and inhabitants instead of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*. Situated at the uppermost part of Kāntipur city, as the name *Than* signifies, it is famous as the monastery where Atiśā *Dīpaṅkar Śrijnāna* resided in the middle of eleventh century and Dharmaswāmin in thirteenth century. *Pradhāns* and their consanguinial castes in other places are basically *Hindus* but as arranged a special caste called *Subāju* (from *Pradhāns*) are ordained to have the monastery tended by them. Previously, the *Śākyas* from sixteen *Bahi* monasteries group used to tender *pravajyā* offering to *Subājus* but these days the *Vajrācāryas* from *Maitripur Mahāvihār* (*Kwā-bāhā*) one of the monastery from eighteen principal *Bāhās* are providing this service.

Another remarkable feature of this monastery is the manuscript *Prajñāpāramitā* in its possession. The text is written in gold and silver letters. There is the tradition of recitation of the text by the *Vajrācāryas* of *Thane Pui* and some *Vajrācāryas* of *Lāyaku Pui* from *Lāyaku-Bahi* annually in the month of *Gūnla*. The incumbent researcher is also one of the member of such recitation *guthī*. The monastery has several remarkable specialties as mentioned above. Another one of them is its patron, *Sinhasārthabāhū*, a mysterious figure who is deified as the main deity of the monastery. There are several sayings, legendary story about him concerning his heroic deeds and his survival due to *Karuṇāmaya* from the hands of *Yakṣanis* (Demonesses). Every year, a festival is held with fanfare for two days in the name of *Chakan dyo*, deified name of *Sinhasārthabāhū*, from *Fālgun Pūrnimā*, full moon

day of the month *Fālgun*.<sup>690</sup> During the festival the replica image of *Sinhasārthabāhū* which resembles that of *Dīpaṅkar Buddha* is displayed publicly, taken in procession and is offered *pūjā* at several places.

### 10.7.2 In Lalitpur

Nowhere in Lalitpur is far from a *Buddhist* courtyard, and in many parts of the city every courtyard seems either to be a monastery or at least to have a *caitya* in it. There are eighteen principal *Mahāvihāras*, 19 main *Bahi* (out of 25 *bahis*) and other ordinary *Bāhās* in Lalitpur. Altogether 185 monasteries are mentioned in Lalitpur.<sup>691</sup> *Durbār* square area has the maximum number of monasteries.<sup>692</sup> Of them some 142 *vihāras* are still standing around Patan city.<sup>693</sup> Within the list of 185 *Bāhā* and *Bahis* of Lalitpur, including its major eighteen *Mahāvihāras* and their branched monasteries and associated units, are some monasteries of Kīrtipur which have two principal *Mahāvihāra*, four *Bāhā* and one *Bahi*.<sup>694</sup>

The monasteries in Lalitpur can be categorized on the basis of *Saṅgha* composition and other monastic activities as follows.

- (i) A group of 16 principal monasteries.
- (ii) A group of 15 *Bahis*
- (iii) A group of 5 branched *Bāhā*
- (iv) Three monasteries of *cailaka Bhikṣu*
- (v) Other Branched *Bāhā* and *Bahi*

#### 10.7.2.1 A group of Sixteen principal monasteries.

Locally it is called *Jhinyā bāhā* meaning 15 monasteries, though they are 16 which are compulsorily visited by the devotees during *Bāhā* worship (*Bāhā pūjā*)

<sup>690</sup> Bhuvan Lal Pradhan, *Kathmandu Upatyakākā kehi Saṁskritik Chirkā- Mirkā* (Some Cultural Colours of Kathmandu Valley), (Kathmandu: Dr. Sunita Manandhar Gurung, 2007), Pp. 71-81

<sup>691</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), Pp. 21-28. For list please see Appendix.

<sup>692</sup> For details on location of main monasteries of Lalitpur, please refer to Map No. 1 in Appendix

<sup>693</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37)

<sup>694</sup> Sangha Ratna Bajracarya, *Jagatpāla Mahāvihāra: Ek Adhyayan* (A study), M.A. Dissertation submitted to Central Department of Buddhist Studies, 2010.

in Lalitpur. This clearly shows one of them is a later addition and this was *Sribachcha Mahāvihāra*. The list of 16 principal Monasteries is as under.<sup>695</sup>

S.N.	Name of Monastery	Name in <i>Sanskrit</i>	Founder (alleged)	<i>San̄gha</i> Composition
1	<i>Bhinche bāhā</i>	<i>Mayurvarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Śankardeva	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
2	<i>Dhum-bāhā</i>	<i>Gūṇalakṣmi Mahāvihāra</i>	Gunalakṣmi	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
3	<i>Dau-bāhā</i>	<i>Duttanāma Mahāvihāra</i>	Rudradeva Gargagotra Varma	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
4	<i>Ta:bāhā</i>	<i>Dharmakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	Bhuvanākara Varma	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
5	<i>Ha:bāhā</i>	<i>Ratnākar Mahāvihāra</i>	Laxmi Kalyān Varma	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
6	<i>Chuka: Bāhā</i>	<i>Chakravarṇa Mahāvihāra</i> <sup>696</sup>	Mānadeva	<i>Śākya</i>
7	<i>Kwā-Bāhā</i>	<i>Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Bhāṣkardeva	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
8	<i>Bu:bāhā</i>	<i>Yashodhara Mahāvihāra</i>	Vidhyādhara Brāhman	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
9	<i>Vam-bāhā</i>	<i>Vajrakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	Sunayadharma	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
10	<i>Jyo-bāhā</i>	<i>Jyotivarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Rudradevānana Pāla	<i>Śākya</i>
11	<i>Yachu-bāhā</i>	<i>Balādhara Gupta Mahāvihāra</i>	Balādhara Gupta	<i>Śākya</i>
12	<i>Su-bāhā</i>	<i>Jayamanohara Varma Mahāvihāra</i>	Indradeva	<i>Śākya</i>
13	<i>Uku-bāhā</i>	<i>Rudravarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Śivadeva Varma	<i>Śākya</i>

<sup>695</sup> *San̄gha* composition is as mentioned by John K. Locke in his *Karunāmaya*, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 32-33

<sup>696</sup> At present *pravajyā* program is not running in this *bāhā*.

14	<i>Guji-bāhā</i>	<i>Vaisravarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Divya Divākara	<i>Śākya</i>
15	<i>Tanga-bāhā</i>	<i>Jesthavarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Yampi Balarcana	<i>Śākya</i>
16	<i>Si:bāhā</i>	<i>Śrivachccha Mahāvihāra</i>	ŚrīVatsa	<i>Śākya</i>

Table 9. Sixteen principal Monasteries of Patan

Mostly, principal monasteries of Kīrtipur are also included in the list of 16 principal monasteries of Lalitpur making the list of 18 monasteries. These 18 monasteries must participate in the *samyak* festival of Lalitpur held in the interval of every four years. The two principal monasteries of Kirtipur are:

17	<i>Cilanchobāhā</i> ( <i>Kyapubāhā</i> )	<i>Padmakāsthagiri Mahāvihāra</i>	Jagatpāla Varma	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
18	<i>Co:bāhā</i>	<i>Āsana Lokeśwara Mahāvihāra or Kacchapālagiri Mahāvihāra</i>	Jagatpāla Varma	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>

Table 10. Two principal Monasteries of Kirtipur kept within Patan

Location of the monasteries is known from the name of the monasteries themselves.

#### 10.7.2.2 Sixteen *Bahi* Monasteries of Lalitpur

As with the case of *Bāhā*, there is a concept of 15 *Bahis* in Lalitpur though there are 16 *Bahis*. Reason is same as with the *Bāhā*.

S.No	Name of <i>Bahi</i> Monastery	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>	Location
1	<i>Pucho-bahi</i>	<i>Akṣeśvar Mahāvihāra and Rakṣeśvar Mahāvihāra</i>	Pulchowk
2	<i>Khwāya-bahi</i>	<i>Kāmuka NāmaMahāvihāra, Tadhaungu and Chidhaungu</i>	Na tole
3	<i>Ikhāchen-bahi</i>	<i>Gopichanda Mahāvihāra(Pintu-bahi) and Napichanda Mahāvihāra (Duntu</i>	Pintu <i>Bahi</i> Tole

		<i>bahi</i> )	
4	<i>Guita-bahi</i>	<i>Gustal Mahāvihāra (Mul guitah bahi), PrathamŚrīMahāvihāra(Ta:dhangu Guitabahi) and Wasuchchashila Mahāvihār (Chidhagu Guita bahi)</i>	Guita
5	<i>Na-bahi</i>	<i>Lokakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	Nakbahil
6	<i>Konti-bahi</i>	<i>LalitvarṇaMahāvihāra</i>	Konti
7	<i>E-bahi</i>	<i>Yampi Mahāvihāra</i>	
8	<i>Ilāya-bahi</i>	<i>Itirāj Mahāvihāra</i>	
9	<i>Ubā-bahi</i>	<i>JayaŚrī Mahāvihāra</i>	
10	<i>Thapā-bahi</i>	<i>Sthavirpatra Mahāvihāra</i>	
11	<i>Jyāva-bahi</i>	<i>JesṭhavarṇaMahāvihāra</i>	
12	<i>Ovā-bahi</i>	<i>RājŚrīMahāvihāra</i>	
13	<i>Kinu-bahi</i>	<i>Lokakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	
14	<i>Nhāyakan-bahi</i>	<i>Surachchandra Mahāvihāra</i>	
15	<i>Dhauga-Bahi</i>	<i>Manimandap Mahāvihāra</i>	
16	<i>Chikan-bahi</i>	<i>Saptapur Mahāvihāra</i>	

Table 11. Sixteen *Bahi* Monasteries of Patan

Other three *bahis* lying in the neighbouring area of Lalitpur are often included within the group of 16 making the total 19 major *bahis* of Lalitpur. They are

1. *Wā-bahi*
2. *Bunga-bahi and*
3. *Kipu-bahi*

If associated *bahis* are also counted as in the cases of *Pucho-bahi*, *Khvāya-bahi*, *Ikhāchen-bahi*, and *Guita-bahi*, the total number of major *bahis* in Lalitpur will be twenty five.

### 10.7.2.3 Other Monasteries

Besides above mentioned *Bāhā* and *Bahi*, there are some other monasteries which also have tradition of maintaining elders system and conferring *pravajyā*. They can be divided into two categories<sup>697</sup>- (i) those affiliated to *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*, and (ii) those which are not associated with any principal monastery.

<sup>697</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 201), P. 155

#### 10.7.2.3.1 Five Branch Monasteries of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvivihāra*

There is a separate identity of five monasteries known to be off-shoot of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvivihāra*. In no way they look different from the principal *Vihāra* as they too have practice of conferring *pravajyā* to neophyte, arrangement of five elders and *Saṅghabhōjan* (communal feast). During *pravajyā* ceremony, elders of *Kwā-bāhā* have to be presided over. After receiving ordination, the novices have to pray everyday for four days in front of the main deity of the shrine i.e. *koṣṭhapāl* deity. These five monasteries are:

S. No.	Local name in <i>Newārī</i>	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>
1	<i>Ikāchchen-bāhā</i>	<i>Suvarṇa Vihāra</i>
2	<i>Mu-bāhā</i>	<i>Gavarmapintha Vihāra</i>
3	<i>Atha: bāhā</i>	<i>Srivatsa Mahāvivihāra</i>
4	<i>Michchu-bāhā</i>	<i>Caityavarṇa Mahāvivihāra</i>
5	<i>Dwārika-bāhā</i>	<i>Dwārika Mahāvivihāra</i>

Table 12. Five Branch Monasteries of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvivihāra*

*Kwā Bāhāl* of Lalitpur, is the monastery in which monasticism is most continuously and visibly kept up in the shrine of the principal deity of a monastery. Here the ancient rules are most clearly preserved. Dwellers related to the monastery claimed descent from the last laicized monks and supported this claim by the title '*Brahmacarya Bhikṣu*' meaning celibate monk they traditionally used in Lalitpur. *Śrāvakyānist* daily rituals are conducted to the main shrine while *Amoghpāsa Lokeśwara* shrine in *Kwā Bāhāl* is nowadays tended by *Newār* monks in the Tibetan tradition.

#### 10.7.2.3.2 Other Three Monasteries with *Cailaka Bhikṣu Saṅgha*

There is a separate group of three monasteries which are not attached to any of principal monasteries. They have the tradition of conferring *pravajyā* in front of a *caitya*. The initiates so ordained are known as *cailaka Bhikṣu*. They have their own *Saṅgha* and systems of five elders. They are



S. No.	Local name in <i>Newārī</i>	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>
1	<i>Henu-bāhā</i>	<i>Layanchaitiyavimva Mahāvihāra</i>
2	<i>Yoku-bāhā</i>	<i>Yokuli Mahāvihāra</i>
3	<i>Khwākha-Na:bāhā</i>	<i>Cakravarti Mahāvihāra</i>

Table 13. Monasteries with *Cailaka Bhikṣu Saṅgha*

*Michchu bāhā* listed above under the 5 branched monasteries of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* also has the tradition of *Cailaka Bhikṣu Saṅgha*. It was excluded from this group of three as it is associated with *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*.

#### 10.7.2.4 Branch Monasteries (*Kachā bāhā and Kachā bahi*)

All other monasteries which are not the principal monasteries or are not listed above are the branched monasteries of either any of the principal monasteries, mainly the *Mūbāhā* or the *bahi*. Most of the principal monasteries of Lalitpur have branched monasteries. The number of the branched monasteries in a monastery may rise up to 35. Few *bahis* also have branched monasteries.

#### 10.7.3 In Bhaktapur

Bhaktapur, once the centre of ruling for more than three hundred years from 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century is the old city of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. There are about 25 monasteries (*Bāhā* and *bahi*) in Bhaktapur proper and nine (*Bāhā*) in Thimi.<sup>698</sup> Most of them are not in good condition. The existing monasteries which are visited during *Bāhā* worship (*Bāhā pūjā*) in Bhaktapur proper are as follows<sup>699</sup>:

<sup>698</sup> Bhadraratna Bajracharya(ed.), *Kwopaya Bāhā Bahi, Buddhist Monasteries of Bhaktapur*, (Kwopa: Maitreya Yuva Saṅgha, 2004), P. 10

<sup>699</sup> *Ibid*,

S.N.	Name	Name in <i>Saṅskrit</i>	Founder (alleged)	<i>Saṅgha</i> Composition
1	<i>Tau-bāhā</i>	<i>Ādipadma Mahāvihāra</i> <sup>700</sup>	Taulāche tole	<i>Buddhacarya Śākya</i>
2	<i>Pashu-bāhā</i>	<i>Prasannaśīla Mahāvihāra</i>	Bhuvanākar	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
3	<i>Viku-bāhā</i>	<i>Kūūlaratna Mahāvihāra</i>	Kwāthando	<i>Śākya</i>
4	<i>Yān-bāhā</i>	<i>Dharmakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>	Bhuvanākar	<i>Vajrācārya &amp; Śākya</i>
5	<i>Enā-bāhā</i>	<i>Indravārṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Ināchā, Devsing, Srijayasingh & Melusingh	<i>Śākya</i>
6	<i>Muni-bāhā</i>	<i>Dharma-uttara Mahāvihāra</i>	Ka: Cha:, Muni Buddhācārya	<i>Śākya</i>
7	<i>Jhaur-bahi</i>	<i>Mangal Dharmadwipa Mahāvihāra</i>	Golmadhi, successor family of Jivachandra <i>Vajrācārya</i>	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
8	<i>Sukudhwāk ā-bahi</i>	<i>Suvarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Sukudhwākā	<i>Suddhakar</i> (Custodian of Bhimsen deity)
9	<i>Akha:-bāhā Ādi-bāhā</i>	<i>Akhandaśīla Mahāvihāra</i> <sup>701</sup>	Bolāche tole, Narendradeva	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
10	<i>Nīwa-bāhā</i>	<i>Jetavarṇa Mahāvihāra</i> <sup>702</sup>	Tekhācho tole, Gunasingh Buddhācārya	<i>Śākya</i>
11	<i>Kuthu-bahi</i>	<i>Baudha Samakrita</i>	Itāchen, now	<i>Vajrācārya</i>

<sup>700</sup> It has only *Buddhācārya Śākyas* as *saṅgha* members. For other details, please refer to Bhadraratna Bajracharya(ed.), *Kwopaya Bāhā Bahi, Buddhist Monasteries of Bhaktapur*, (Kwopa: Maitreya Yuva Saṅgha, 2004)

<sup>701</sup> All the *saṅgha* members are *Vajrācāryas*

<sup>702</sup> The monastery has only *Śākyasaṅgha* members.

		<i>Mahāvihāra</i>	minibus park	& Śākya
12	<i>Thathu-bahi</i>	<i>Jayakirti Mahāvihāra</i> <i>Sukravarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>	Itāchen	<i>Vajrācārya</i> & Śākya
13	<b><i>Tanchakone-bāhā</i></b>	<b><i>Jesṭhavarṇa Mahāvihāra</i></b> <sup>703</sup>	Itāchen	Śākya
14	<b><i>Lashkadya-bāhā</i></b>	<b><i>Lokeśwara Mahāvihāra</i></b> <sup>704</sup>	Itāchen Narendradeva	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
15	<b><i>Bāhāchhen Tadhichen</i></b>	<b><i>Catubrahma Mahāvihāra</i></b> <sup>705</sup>	Golmadhi	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
16	<b><i>Waun-bāhā</i></b>	<b><i>Manjuvarṇa Mahāvihāra or Manjuvajra Vihāra</i></b>	Baikāl, Manjuvajra	<i>Vajrācārya</i>
17	<b><i>Yālā-bahi</i></b>			

Table 14. Monasteries in Bhaktapur at present

Among these monasteries, eleven are the principal monasteries. The monasteries shown in bold letters are the principal monasteries. There are only nine active *Saṅgha*. Among the monasteries, *Prasannaśīla Mahāvihāra* seems more functional as it preserved the tradition of ten elders, the *sthaviras*. In other monasteries, elders are called *Nāyo* instead of *Thāyepā*. At *Catubrahma Mahāvihāra*, *Nāya* is chosen among the relatives of a clan, the custom not seen elsewhere. *Prasannaśīla Mahāvihāra* also has an external *Saṅgha*, the members of which are believed to have migrated from *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Patan. Though they get *pravajyā* at the former monastery (*Prasannaśīla*), they do not have any role in the *saṅghic* activities of the monasteries. They make their own assembly separately once a year.

<sup>703</sup> Only *Buddhacārya Śākyas* are the *Saṅgha* members

<sup>704</sup> Exclusive monastery of *Vajrācāryasaṅgha* members

<sup>705</sup> It was the seat of Jivachandra of around 611 N.S., the son of Suratvajra of Kathmandu, the patron of *Dathu Pui* and founder of *Takṣe Bāhā*.

In Bhaktapur, there is a group of 6 monasteries where ordination program is not carried out. They are the *Bahis* as follows:

S. no.	Local name	Saṅskrit name
1	<i>Jhaur Bahi</i>	<i>Mangal Dharmadwip Mahāvihāra</i>
2	<i>Thathu-bahi</i>	<i>Jayakīrti Mahāvihār</i>
3	<i>Kwathu-bahi</i>	<i>Baudha Samakṛita Mahāvihār</i>
4	<i>Sukudhwāka-bahi (Lun-bahi)</i>	<i>SuvarṇaMahāvihāra</i>
5	<i>Yala-bahi</i>	
6	<i>Yān-bahi</i>	<i>Dharmakīrti Vihāra</i>

Table 15. Monasteries of Bhaktapur having no ordination program at present

Some nine monasteries which have been proved existent in Bhaktapur by historical evidences were not found these days. They are *Udhotkarvye Vihāra*, *Khusi Vihāra*, *Kotho Vihāra*, *Peta Vihāra*, *Yathur Vihāra*, *Sakulan Vihāra*, *Māde Vihāra*, *Dharmadhātu Mahāvihāra* and *Yalache Bahi*.

#### 10.7.3.1 In Madhyapur (Thimi)

Madhyapur Thimi, a part of Bhaktapur, lying between Hanumante river and Manohara river is believed to have nine monasteries, as the local say *Gungu bāhā* meaning nine monasteries. But only eight are extant. They are:

S.No	Local name	Saṅskrit name
1.	<i>Ta: bāhā</i>	<i>Hemvarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>
2.	<i>Digu-bāhā</i>	<i>Guṇakīrti Mahāvihāra</i>
3.	<i>Yāchin-bāhā</i>	<i>Heranilavarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>
4.	<i>Wāku-bāhā</i>	<i>Gunavakyā Mahāvihāra</i>
5.	<i>Nhu-bāhā</i>	<i>Herasuvarṇa Mahāvihāra</i>
6.	<i>Dathu-bāhā</i>	<i>Jetavana Mahāvihāra</i>
7.	<i>Jiswān-bāhā</i>	<i>Purvasthita Mahāvihāra</i>
8.	<i>Pāti-bāhā</i>	<i>Pāti Vihāra</i>

Table 16. Monasteries of Thimi

Among above mentioned monasteries, only the *Saṅghas* of *Ta:bāhā*, *Digu bāhā* and *Yāchinbāhā* are functional now having ordination program. *Ta:bāhā* is the main monastery which all the *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members of the region are related to.

### 10.8 Activities in Monasteries

Monastery is more than an architectural type. It is a complex of buildings (usually round a courtyard) with a *Buddha* shrine and an *āgaṃ* which are the focal points of the devotion and ritual of the community. In *Newār Buddhist* tradition, the *Vihāra* plays a significant ritualistic and religious role in society. In almost every monastery, there is a *Saṅgha* to carry out monastic functions. As instructed by the *Buddha*, the *Buddhist* practitioners did not stay separately alone but stay together forming *Saṅgha* and this is still followed in Nepal.<sup>706</sup> It is a holy complex where monasticism or monastic practices become overt and it is publicly demonstrated through a host of activities, both esoteric (done inside the sacred shrine) and exoteric regularly or occasionally with wider public participation on a calendric basis. At least once a month the most senior members of the *Saṅgha*, either alone or accompanied by a *Gubhāju* priest, worship the resident divinities.<sup>707</sup> Such activities range from regular worship to mass celebrations and performances. The *Vihāra*, with its sacred and secular complexes, deities and objects, priests and devotees, remains the main focus of all activities. In the present context, the term “monasticism” is used to denote the life style of the members of the *Vihāra* observed through the various activities where gods and people, the donors and the receivers, performers and participants meet together under the umbrella of the sacred complex. The people of Nepal, especially the *Newārs* of the Kathmandu Valley, are sentimentally attached to the monastery, because it is the center of their religious and cultural life and the focus of their social organization and relations. In order to understand the status of *Buddhist* monasticism, *Buddhist* culture, rites and rituals of Nepal, a cursory look at the monastery is therefore imperative. The “Monasteries” should be understood in the context of *Buddhist* culture and monasticism sustained as the centre of learning and ritual performances.

<sup>706</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 4

<sup>707</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 27

Following the path of the *Buddha*, the followers mainly the monastics began establishing monastery (*Vihāra*) as a centre of education, knowledge and meditation. From the very ancient period, Nepal was famous for its *Buddhist Vihāra*. These *Vihāras* were humming with intellectual activities of the Nepalese and foreign *Buddhists* and were the centres for the propagation of *Buddhist* religion and culture.

The monasteries have their own peculiar characteristics which are intensely religious and supremely symbolic. Their quiet and strategic location provided the residing monastics and scholars opportunity and inspiration to create bulks of *Buddhist* literature which not only educated the natives but also attracted foreign visitors. The monastics of the *Vihāra* possessed tremendous knowledge of religious texts. All big *Vihāras* were inhabited by great scholars and famous priests of the time who created a good collection of books. Therefore, the Nepalese *Vihāra* became the storehouse of *Buddhist* literature and *Buddhist* artefacts. There is the tradition of exhibiting these valuables in the name of *Baidyo bwayegu* during the festival of *Gūnlā*. *Buddhist Vihāra* such as *Than Bahi*, *Saval Bāhā*, *Chārumati Vihāra*, *Rudravarṇa Mahāvihāra*, and *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* played the significant role in this regard. Because of their fame, they were visited by foreign scholars from time to time. *Vihāra* is the main centre for the development of the religious texts and manuscripts. Numerous *Buddhist* texts were written or copied there. Translation of original *Saṅskrit* and *Newārī* into Tibetan took place in various *Vihāras* of Nepal. The popular texts include *Pañcarakṣā*, *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpārāmitā*, *Nāmasangiti*, *Ganadvayūha*, *Kārandavyūha* etc. Most of the *Tibetan* and *Saṅskrit* manuscripts were also copied here.

Monastery also assumed the role of cultural and ritual centres where life-cycle rites and many communal-functions and family rituals were performed under the leadership of the resident monastics. It is also the monastery where the newcomers or neophyte takes entrance into the *Saṅgha* as *Saṅgha* member initially being a monk taking *Pravajyā* (ordination). The *Vihāra* became embodiment of *Buddhist* religion and culture in Nepal. Hemraj Shakya, the epigraphist and scholar of repute enlisted the monastic activities in the *Buddhist* monasteries of *Nepal-maṇḍala*.<sup>708</sup>

---

<sup>708</sup> Hemraj Shakya, “Jhigu Baudha Sampada- Our buddhist heritage” in Herakaji Bajracharya, *Lalitpur Baudha Vihāra*, (Lalitpur: Baudha VihāraSaṅgha, 2000), Pp. ka- ga. Please refer to appendix for the list of activities of the *Newār* monasteries.

The activities are carried out on daily, monthly and annual basis according to the lunar calendar. Usually on the first, eight, tenth, fourteenth and fifteenth days of the lunar month, elaborate *pūjā* performances are done. However, as with monasteries of any traditions (*Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyānā* etc.), there is no uniformity of the activities carried out. The activities taken up by one monastery may be different from those of other monasteries. Activities which are generally followed are according to the will and preference of the *Saṅgha* members in a monastery. A monastery may have several *guthīs* to carry on various such activities.<sup>709</sup>

---

<sup>709</sup> For further details on the activities carried out in the monasteries, please refer to the chapter Monastic lifestyle Pp. 291-334

## CHAPTER XI

### *Saṅgha*- the functional unit of Monasticism

#### 11.1 *Saṅgha*

The *Saṅgha* represents an institution and has a great importance in *Buddhism*. An institution, in anthropological language, is a group of people committed for some purpose, following prescribed rules and making up a structure.<sup>710</sup> *Saṅgha* literally means a group of practitioners of the *Dharma*, members of which follow a set of prescribed rules and regulations, synonymously known also as *Vinaya* or *prātimokṣa* (Pāli: *Pātimokkha*). The *Saṅgha* is the *Buddhist* assembly, community or collective body which authoritatively studies, experiences and expounds the *Dharma*.<sup>711</sup> So It represents the embodiment of the Dhamma. It is usually translated into English as the *Buddhist Order*. The Term *Saṅgha*, is used from the earliest days of *Buddhism* to denote the community of *Bhikṣus* or *Buddhist* monks and office, and function within the *Saṅgha* go by seniority of initiation.<sup>712</sup> But *Saṅgha* was originated as a sect of the *parivrājaka* (wandering mendicant) community of 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C, not as an Order.<sup>713</sup> When the *Saṅgha* had grown to the number of sixty one number (including the *Buddha* himself), the *Buddha* urged all the members to wander as missionaries to different directions to spread his message for *bahujana hitāye* (for the benefit of many), *bahujana sukhāye* (for the happiness of many), *lokānukampāye* (out of compassion for the world). He also cautioned monks for not letting two members do the same thing in view of saving time and energy invested. As a result cultural revolution was brought into the society. Now, the *Saṅgha* is defined as the order of ordained Buddhist monks, comprising at least four monks, while a group of two to three monks is regarded as *gaṇa*.

The monastic *Saṅgha* is regarded as extremely precious, and worthy of deep reverence and respect for two basic reasons. Firstly because the monks continue to follow the holy life laid down by the *Buddha* in its fullness, and secondly because

<sup>710</sup> S. Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10), P. 23

<sup>711</sup> Richard A. Gard (Ed.), *Buddhism*, (CT: Konecky & Konecky, 1961), P. 167

<sup>712</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 13 & 56

<sup>713</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 539ii), P. 12



they transmit the teaching from generation to generation, out of concern for the welfare of others. The *Saṅgha* is responsible for maintaining, translating, advancing, and spreading the teachings of the *Buddha*. In other words, *Dharma* or *Buddhist* teachings are preserved and disseminated by the monks who form the *Saṅgha*, the functional unit of *Buddhism*. They also furnish the society with a model and guidance for the practice of the *Dharma*. *Saṅgha* together with *Buddha* and *Dharma* is called *Tri-ratna* (Triple gems) upon which refuge is taken. *Saṅgha* represents a group of taught persons well versed in teachings (the *Dharma*) expounded by the teacher, the *Buddha*. It is an ancient tradition of the *Buddhists* to propagate the *Dharma* by establishing *Saṅgha*. Unless one takes *Pravrajyā* or ordination he is not considered the member of the *Saṅgha*. So, *Saṅgha* also denotes to a group of venerable ones who have undergone ordination with due faith and have undertaken vows to comply by the prescribed rules. Otherwise, those who live the life according to *Buddhist* education or lesson with due faith are called *upāsaka* (male) or *upāsikā* (female). The *Buddha* taught the laity as well as the *Saṅgha* and was mindful of its mode of life in society; furthermore, the *Saṅgha* developed as a monastic institution within society and was supported by it. Though the *Buddhist Saṅgha* is composed four assemblies called *catu-pariṣada* of (i) monks (*Bhikṣus*), nuns (*Bhikṣuṇīs*), *Upāsaka* (male lay followers) and *Upāsikā* (female lay followers), *Saṅgha* members denote to the monastics (monks and nuns) only. They are distinguished from the laity by their dress pattern, way of life, and particularly by their spiritual faculties. They devote maximum of their time in religious and spiritual practices. Therefore, the role of the monks is so distinct and prominent, the term *Saṅgha* is often used exclusively in reference to the community of monks and does not cover the laity as in its broader sense.

There is a strong persistent presence of *Saṅgha* which is the backbone of *Buddhist* monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala* as it is in every *Buddhist* tradition. Every monastery has a *Saṅgha* or is associated with a common *Saṅgha*.

### 11.2 *Saṅgha* types and *Newār Saṅgha*

In broad sense, there are two types of *Saṅgha* (i) *Saṅgha* focusing upon maintaining *Vinaya* and (ii) *Saṅgha* stressing upon the *Dharma* i.e. *Sūtras* or scriptures. The former is known as the *Śrāvaka Saṅgha*, its monks recite *vinaya* during their council or gathering and its main aim is to attain arhatship while the

later as *Jina Saṅgha* and its members prefer reciting *sūtras* during their gathering. *Jina* literally means conqueror of sensuality. Obviously, *Newār* type falls within the second type, as they often recite *Navadharmā* or *Nava sūtra* instead of *Vinaya* during their gathering. Sometimes, *Ārya Saṅgha* (order of realized beings) or noble *Saṅgha* was used to denote ideological *Saṅgha* comprised of enlightened beings or *arhats* or at least of *srotapanna* attainments. The concept appears in other forms of *Buddhism* like *Sarvāstivāda*, *Mahāsāṃghika*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. Many *Tibetan Buddhist* sects also have used the term for their pantheons. The *Āryas* may be of the listener (Skt. *Śrāvaka*), self-evolver (Skt. *pratyekabuddha*), or *bodhisattva* class. With pathway minds needing no further training, *āryas* attain liberation and become liberated beings (Skt. *arhat*) of their respective classes. It has been already discussed above in the earlier chapter that *Mahāsāṃghika* preferred to use *Ārya Saṅgha* for their *Saṅgha*, and there was a period in the history when *Ārya Saṅgha* was used to denote to *Mahāsāṃghika Saṅgha*. The monastic order is called the conventional *Saṅgha* because admission to the order depends entirely on the convention of ordination, which can be given to any properly qualified candidate. It does not require any special spiritual attainment, but simply a person who wishes to enter the order.

### 11.3 *Saṅgha* members/Monks-

*Buddhism* can not be imagined without monks or monastics. *Buddhism* exists in Nepal as there exist monks. At least for traditional South Asia, *Buddhism* cannot exist without monks and that the *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* of the Kathmandu valley are monks, albeit married householder monks.<sup>714</sup> Upon not seeing apparently monks in *Newār Buddhism* many scholars mainly outsiders got confused and raised question about *Buddhism* of Nepal. Some wrote about the *Buddhism* without monks in Nepal and they knowingly or unknowingly tried to cast it as the corrupt practice. But, those who closely observe and study *Newār Buddhism* find that it is not the case and that *Newār Buddhism* also had full participation of ordained monks who have their own *Saṅgha*. There is a number of *Vihāras* still inhabited by *Buddhist Saṅgha* members who refer themselves as *Bare*, a derivative of the *Sanskrit* term *Vande* or *Vandanā*, a term of respect used from ancient times for the monk.<sup>715</sup>

<sup>714</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 513), P. 134

<sup>715</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P.3

They will have a round of rituals and ceremonies with other specified activities which bind the community together.

Monks in Kathmandu valley in *Newār Buddhist* tradition are not now overtly seen by the outsiders as they do not always wear distinctly distinguishable monk's robe nor they always keep shaved heads but are seen pragmatic doing skilled jobs. Local *Bares*, a special *Buddhist* community of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* play the role of monks and traditionally *Newār* society has accepted them as monks. Several reasons for this can be forwarded. They are the elite group guiding the *Buddhist* people. That's why they are called *Bare*, the word derived from *Vande* or *Vandeju* meaning venerable ones. They are entitled to receive the title after their symbolic entry into the monkhood through the ritualistic process called *Bare chuyigu* or *Vande luyigu* and *Ācāryahood* through another successive process called *Ācā luyigu*. Their signs of monk are symbolic. In occasions only they wear robes, keep patched heads and other paraphernalia of religious monkish identity. One needs to peep and peer into their society and culture to find their *Buddhist* monkish outlook/characters. This custom of theirs made their monasticism unique and outsiders misunderstood and made wrong assertion that *Newār Buddhism* is without monks.<sup>716</sup> For simple question, such assumption becomes meaningless. How can *Buddhism* survive without a *Saṅgha* and *monks*?. Robed monks of *Theravāda* made their appearance just about some seven decades before in Nepal and they were heartily welcomed and supported by already existent *Buddhist* society of Kathmandu valley as *Theravāda* teaching is also a part of their tradition according to their scriptures like *Hevajra*. Several medieval colophons and inscriptions mention monastics and *saṅgha* members like *Bhikṣus*, *Śākyas* (*Śākyabhikṣus*, *Śākyavaṃśa*, *Brahmacarya bhikṣu*) and *Vajrācārya*. At present, there is nobody who is addressed simply *Bhikṣu* in *Newār Buddhist* tradition. Medieval inscriptions reveal many monastics who were simply called *Bhikṣus*. They could be celibate monks as some scholars are of opinion that celibate monasticism existed till 17<sup>th</sup> century. It has been already discussed above in late Medieval period. But there were also some inscriptions which mention about those *Bhikṣus* with wives and sons.<sup>717</sup> Those who were called *Bhikṣu* either disappeared or all of them converted to *Śākya* and *Vajrācāryas*. Now, there are *Śākya* and *Vajrācāryas* only playing the role of *bhikṣus*.

<sup>716</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37)

<sup>717</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 92

Every *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* must be a member of a monastic community based on a monastery. He becomes a member by going through Monastic initiation in that monastery, a rite in which he spends four days as a full fledged monk. This gives him membership, that is, the right and duty to participate in the monastery's recurrent functions, in particular to take turns as guardian of the principal deity and other monastic activities. Eventually, by seniority according to time of initiation, he may become one of the five or ten or sometimes twenty elders of the monastery, for which it is necessary to have taken *Tantric* initiation. He is then responsible, with the other elders, for the regular worship of the monastery's *Tantric* deities, and will also have various other ceremonial functions. Elders are often invited to receive gifts on auspicious occasions. So, the institutions and traditions of the *Śākya* and *Vajrācāryas* do indeed define them as monks.

*Bares* are recruited as *Buddhist* monks at very younger stage through the agency of their parents or guardians. It was considered important to make them monks before they had experienced sexual activities, so monks were brought to the monastery as young boys, usually between the ages of 6-12. At the ordination of young boys, the five most senior elders must be present and pour the consecrating water over the new members; for this, and on certain other occasions, the elders and practitioners uncover their right shoulder in monastic fashion. This tradition of *Newār Buddhists* had long lasting psychological impact on the ordained boys that they commit to abide by *Buddhist* code for the whole life. Thus, interestingly, the process of monastic socialization ultimately has worked in Nepal.

Though there is a tradition of being monk (*bhikkhu*) initially after taking *Pravajyā* (ordination) in a monastery and getting fully attached to that particular monastery, the ordained person needs not be celibate monk for rest of the life. He becomes celibate and full fledged monk for certain period which has been now reduced at least to four days. One has to do so compulsorily to be the member of *Saṅgha* of the monastery. The act of being monk and taking ordination in the monastery is called *Bare chuyegu* in local *Newārī* language or *cudākarma* which has already been discussed in the Chapter 'Monastic Life Style in *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*'. After *Cūdākarma* the ordained person is regarded as *Śākyabhikkhu* and given the membership into the *Saṅgha* of the concerned monastery and member of *Śākya* community. If he further undergoes initiation called *Ācāryābhiṣeka* in the

esoteric chamber of the monastery, he is promoted to *Vajrācārya* title and becomes the member of *Vajrācārya* community. Thus, the Nepalese *Buddhist Saṅgha* primarily consists of groups of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*. One thing is common among all *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* in that they all undergo *pravajyā* (ordination) in a monastery according to the procedures as directed in the old text “*Kriyā Saṁgraha*”<sup>718</sup> which is supposed to have been written by Nāgarjunapāda and commentated by *Ācāryā Mahā Paṇḍit* Kuladutta of supposedly 12<sup>th</sup> century, that they all are householder monks not celibate monks. A *Vajrācārya* remains the member of *Saṅgha* of the monastery where he was given ordination and also the member of regional *Saṅgha* (*Pui Ācā Gu*) and greater national *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* called “*De Ācā Gu*”. Though past history<sup>719</sup> reveals that any desirous person can become *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* after obtaining ordination and proven high *Buddhist* scholarship, later these titles (*Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*) got transformed into castes and the tradition of conferring ordination, and initiation is now confined to these castes only. *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* together with other *Buddhist* followers’ group form a vital and energetic community of practitioners who adhere to a set of practices revolving around the narratives of the *Svayambhūpurāṇa*.<sup>720</sup> The monasticism and culture *Buddhism* has taught in Nepal and the *Saṅgha* and monasteries it propagated undoubtedly still survived; in fact, it remains to this day as a vital functioning part of our cultural heritage. In its progress through long centuries, it continually annexed to itself the culture and art, the traditions and folk lores, the pieties and emotions of the people.

Those who call themselves *bare*, *Śākyabhikṣus* or *Śākyavaṁśa* and *Vajrācārya* are in fact married householders but are accepted as the monks by their society. There are references to some of the inhabitants of the *Vihāras* as *Vajrācārya*, masters of the *tantric* tradition that confirm their presence even before the beginning of the *Malla* period by N.S. 213.<sup>721</sup> It seems that by the end of the *Malla* there was no more celibate monks, if there were they were certainly the exception to the rule.<sup>722</sup>

<sup>718</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 173), Pp. 12-13

<sup>719</sup> Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 174)

<sup>720</sup> *Svayambhūpurāṇa*- Classical Buddhist religious text of Kathmandu, highly revered, available in various long and short forms. It highlights the importance of *Svayambhū* which is the most sacred monument in the *Newār* Buddhist community and serves as the ontological source of the religion, as indicated by textual evidence and ritual practices.

<sup>721</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 3

<sup>722</sup> *Ibid*

The inhabitants of the *Vihāras* still called themselves *Bhikṣu* or *Śākyabhikṣu* and the inhabitants of the *bahis* in Patan still called themselves *brahmacārya Bhikṣu*. Because of the continued use of the old terms by married *Bare* or householder monks it is impossible to say with any certainty that a reference to a *Bhikṣu* or even a *brahmacārya Bhikṣu* indicates a celibate monk. This is still the case today, each of the *bāhās* and *bahis* is still inhabited and tended by a *Saṅgha* of initiated *Śākyabhikṣus* and *Vajrācāryas*, who are nevertheless married men with families. Furthermore, under the influence of a growing ascendancy of *Hinduism* and the *Hindu* caste system, the deed which is often assigned to the king Jayasthitimalla, the *Bare* became in fact a caste. In anthropological terms this means that the *Saṅgha* of the monastery has become a patrilineal descent group. One has to be the son of a *Śākyabhikṣu* or *Vajrācārya* to be eligible for initiation into the *Saṅgha*, and one joins the monastery of his father. The monasteries are no longer open communities accepting anyone who wants to lead the life of a *Bhikṣu*. Sons of *Vajrācārya* or *Śākya* by lowercaste wives are not allowed to go through Monastic Initiation in his father's monastery, but must do it outside, mostly at a *caitya*, which confers no membership of a monastic community.

#### 11.4 Arrangement of Elders

In order to run *saṅghakamma* and other monastic activities smoothly by the *saṅgha*, there is arrangement of elders peculiar to *Newār* system. It has already been mentioned above that almost every monastery has a *saṅgha* with *saṅgha* members. Senior *Saṅgha* members are called *Sthavira* in *Pāli* or *Saṅskrit*, *Thāyepā* or *Thakāli* or *Ājus* in local vernacular meaning Elders. In Bhaktapur, they are called *Nāyak*. The seniormost of the elder is called *Thapā Āju* if he is a *Śākya* or *Cakreśvar* (title-lord of the circle) if a *Vajrācārya*. According to the monasteries, *Śākya saṅgha* and *Vajrācārya saṅgha* can have their own separate 'thakāli' or the *sarva saṅgha* has common *thakāli* whether he is a *Śākya* or *Vajrācārya*. Almost each monastery has a *Saṅgha* with atleast a *thāyepā*. *Saṅgha*' elders take further initiation (*sthavirābhiṣeka*, *pañca sthavirārohan*) to become authorized *Sthaviras* (elders) before being appointed as *Āju* or *Cakreśvar* through a ceremony. The word *Āju* literally derived from *Ārya* meaning realizer/knower of truth. Each monastery *saṅgha* records a continuous written list of ordained members, with each batch of initiates added. Based upon the list *Ājus* are selected. It is under the prerogatives of the *Ājus* or elders to look after monastery office, *Ājus* sit in *āgaṃ* room of the

monastery for *daśami pūjā*, *caturdaśī pūjā*, *amavasya pūjā*, *duttapūjā* etc. They must compulsorily be present for initiation programs. They are made present in their traditional attire in important monastic functions. Their presence accounts for grace of the programs. So, their position is highly respected and much coveted as they are the only authorized personnels to worship the main tantric deities of the *āgaṃ*. To carry on such activities the monasteries of Kathmandu and some *bāhā* of Lalitpur like *Cuka bāhā*, *Jyo bāhā*, *Sau bāhā*, *Yachu bāhā*, *Vām bāhā* and the *bahi* monasteries mostly have five *ājus*, while some other *bāhā* monasteries in Lalitpur have ten elders, as the representatives of ten stages of *Bodhisattva*-path. There is provision of twelve *ājus* and eleven *ājus* in *Bu bāhā* and *Hakhā bāhā* respectively. *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* has a total of 30 elders or *Ājus* including those of *Ilhanani* (its associated unit). In Kathmandu, the *saṅgha* has mostly five *Thakālis*. There is a system of seven elders at *Itum bāhā* (*Keśacandra-pārāvarta Mahāvihār*). It is a group of ten ‘*Daśanāyaka*’ in Bhaktapur.<sup>723</sup> Such group of *ājus* or *Thakālis* is like an executive body. The *Ājus* hold supreme position in the *Saṅgha* and act as authorized executive members. It is taken as prestigious to be *ājus* though it demands a lot of rules to be followed. But, elders reserve liberty to act as *ājus*. There is no compulsion. A member can decline from being *āju* if he does not want to be. The custom of officiating *Saṅghasthavira* (*āju* or *cakreśvar* in our case) as the head of the *Saṅgha* came into prevalence in India by the 2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> century.<sup>724</sup> Therefore, *Newār* monastic tradition can also be linked to those period. *Cakreśwar* or *āju* is authorized to appoint able members of the community to conduct various *Saṅgha* duties.<sup>725</sup> They are authorized monastic personnels who have the responsibility and duty to (i) arrange for the traditional monastic activities at the monastery, (ii) oversee administrative activities (iii) represent the monastery *Saṅgha* attending the invitation at religious observances, (iv) maintain and coordinate relationship with other monasteries.

Among the *Cakreśwars* of principal monasteries of a district, the seniormost one is regarded *Mūl-cakreśwar* or *De Thāyepā* (the national religious head). Enthronement of *Mūl-cakreśwar* is done amidst a religious ceremony with

<sup>723</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 698), P. 11

<sup>724</sup> Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362), P. 137

<sup>725</sup> *Ibid*

conference of a special dress and a crown upon him.<sup>726</sup> In the ceremony, he is revitalized and consecrated with *pañcābhiṣeka*. He is also given an additional *abhiṣeka* the ‘*catrābhiṣeka*’ conferring on him a special privilege of using a ceremonial umbrella the ‘*catra*’. The symbolic articles like the crown, the *catra*, the special dress are taken back when he passes away and are handed over to a new *Mūl-cakreśwar*. At present, the four regions of three districts of *Nepal-maṇḍala*: Kāntipur, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Thimi have separate *Mūl-cakreśwar*. In Kathmandu, there is a council (like a central committee) of *cakreśwars* of eighteen principal monasteries and the eldest one enjoys the position of *Mūl-cakreśwar*. Though there are several *Mū Bāhā* monasteries in Bhaktapur, only elder *Vajrācārya saṅgha* members of *Prasannaśil Mahāvihār* are enjoying the privilege of being *Mūl-cakreśwar*. It is regarded prestigious and blessed to have *Mūl-cakreśwar*’s presence in religious observances. A *Mūl-cakreśwar* in *Newār* monasticism is equivalent to *Saṅghamahānāyaka*, the supreme *Saṅgha* head of *Buddhist saṅgha* in current *Theravāda* tradition. Thus, the monastics are first classed as *Bhikṣus* and *Ācārya* (Pali *Ācariyo*) Among them are *Sthavira*, *Pañca-sthavira*, *Mūlasthavira/Cakreśvar*, *Mūla-cakreśvar*, *De-thāyepā* (*Mu thāyepā*) etc.

Besides, *ājus*, *cakreśwars* and *Mul-cakreśwar*, there is a provision of *Rāj-guruju* and other assisting monastic personnels like *Pacihā*, *Mā-Gubhāju*, and *Hāmu-Guruju* in Kāntipur. *Raj guruju* who is also called *Lāya-guruju* means royal *Buddhist* master appointed by the king in the past. Presence of *Rāj-guruju* is compulsory during making of *Mūl-cakreśwars* in Kathmandu. He is also authorized to take up role of *De Thāyepā* or *Mūl-cakreśwar* in absence of the later. In this sense, he is like vice-president if *Mūl-cakreśwar* is to be assumed as president. It is his responsibility to oversee registration of *Vajrācāryas* of eighteen principal monasteries of Kāntipur, to arrange seating of elders according to

<sup>726</sup> Recently, an enthronement of *Mūl-cakreśvara* called *Mūla-cakreśvarābhiṣeka* (*De Thāyepā Luyegu*) took place at *Ratnaketu Mahāvihāra* (*Jwā bāhā*) on May 4, 2013 (*Baiṣāk 20, 2070*). In the ceremony the *Cakreśvara* of the monastery, Sri Chandra Bajra Bajracharya was conferred the title of *Mūl-cakreśvara* in presence of distinguished personnels and public and with eventful ceremonial music ‘*Panca-tāl*’. The ceremony was presided over by the representatives of *Theravāda bhikṣus*, *lāmā gurus*, *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya gurus*, *Cakreśvaras* and *Thāyepās* of other monasteries of Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Kirtipur, Vice-chancellor of Lumibini Buddhist University and general public. The ceremony was conducted as a rule after demise of the previous *Mūl-cakeśwar*. It is the first time that the ceremony was conducted openly amidst visitors/public. Some pictures of the event are includes in Appendix.



seniority, to look after the arrangement of annual gathering of *Ācā gu*, to fix its turn holder, to conduct the activities as discussed and finalized by the council. Invitation to a religious performances which need presence of elders is often channeled through *Lāyaguruju*. Thus, his role also resembles that of a general secretary of an organization. The order of *Lāyaguruju* seems prevalent in Kathmandu at least from the period before 1430 AD (Yaksamalla's time). *Pacihā*, *Mā-Gubhāju*, and *Hāmu-Guruju* are the assisting personnels serving the monastics through *Lāyaguruju*. *Pacihā*, derived from the word *Pacimhicā* meaning fund keeper acts as accountant cum store keeper for the *Lāyaguruju* when the religious events like *De Ācā Gu* have to be arranged. He is also treated as an extra priest participating along with *Lāyaguruju* and others in the religious activities. *Mā-Gubhāju* (perhaps derived from *Mahāguruju*) maintains the monastic activity records, to call and bring the needed person at the site for the needful. It is the duty of *Hāmu-Guruju* to relay the messages and to make delivery of invitation cards to the right persons. His role seems significant when there was no invitation card distribution system as printing press was yet to be introduced, and invitees had to be informed personally. The order of *Lāyaguruju* and his associates resembles the administrative secretariat. At present the role of *Rāj-guruju* and *pacihā*, *hāmu-guruju* falls under the prerogative of *Vajrācāryas* of *Śrīkhanda Tarumūl Mahāvihāra*. There are lineages of *Vajrācārya* families from this monastery at present rendering such services.

In Lalitpur, there is an arrangement of *Betāju* who assists the *Cakreśwars* or *Thapā-Āju* in carrying out ritualistic activities. He is not the elder of the monastery but is chosen for his knowledge of rituals for the purpose. Therefore, he is always from *Vajrācārya* members. Exceptionally, *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihār* has two such *Betājus* while other monasteries has only one. Similarly, there is a system of *Bisa*. A *Bisa* is that who is destined to become recognized elder '*Āju*' in near future. He can be called an apprentice or trainee elder. One becomes *Bisa* on seniority basis after undergoing a ritualistic process called *Bisa luyigu*. He later replaces *Āju* when the seat becomes vacant. One should not decline from becoming *Bisa* but he may reject the post of *Āju* if he does not wish. A number of *Bisa* in maximum is four as in the case of *Yaśodhar Mahāvihār*. *Bisas* look after the arrangement of religious affairs of the *saṅgha* of the monastery.

### 11.5 *Saṅghakamma*

All dealings and performances related to the *Saṅgha* were executed by joint acts called *Saṅghakamma*.<sup>727</sup> For a *Saṅghakamma* which is regulated and validated by *saṅghik* constitutional rules, it would be necessary to assemble the whole *Saṅgha* (*Samaggatta*) or at least the executive group of *Saṅgha* representatives (*ājus* in Nepalese context). The completeness of the assembly is insisted on. Anyone unable to join in it must either remain for the time being in the periphery of the site or send his consent for any decision made. In the *Mahāparinibanna suttanta*, one of the safeguards against degeneration of the *Saṅgha* is said to be the holding of complete assemblies for the purpose of the *Saṅghakamma*.<sup>728</sup> Various forms of *Saṅghakamma* are still observed by the *Saṅgha* members. *Saṅgha* makes arrangement for regular ordination program, initiation program for *Vajrācāryas*, act as turn-wise keeper of the monastery according to seniority basis, carry on daily monastic functions, do group recitation of *nāmasangiti*, *stotra*, *saddharma*, conduct other monthly and regular functions. They also organize *Gūṇla* service, *Kārtik* service, *Pūrṇimā* service, make arrangement for display of *Buddhist* deities and monastic objects on occasions, arrange for performance of *Pañcadān*, *Diśi pūjā*, *Aṣṭami vrata*, *Basundhāravrata* etc. With the increase in the membership of the *Saṅgha*, difficulty grew in gathering and coming to the conclusion for making decision for the *Saṅghakamma*. Therefore, a selected group mostly composed of elders was taken to represent the entire *Saṅgha* body.<sup>729</sup> This must have given rise to governing body of five *ājus* or ten *ājus*. *Saṅghakamma* still practiced in *Nepal-maṇḍala* bears similarity with those referred at length by Itsing.<sup>730</sup> These were – ordination of *Bhikṣus*, the holding of *upoṣatha* (various *vrata* like *Aṣṭami vrata* in our case), proper recitation of scriptures and observation of monastic rules, assent of gifts (*dāna*) distributed during ceremonies, summoning and examination of the guilty *Bhikṣus* (*Adhikarana*), taking care of articles of worship, construction and preservation of monastic fields etc.<sup>731</sup> Such similarities prove antiquity of *Newār* monasticism, at least to the period before the time of Itsing.

The organization of *bāhā Saṅgha*, as a community, is also more structured with a larger group of elders, more *guthīs* and more obligations. In other world, the

<sup>727</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 546), P. 120

<sup>728</sup> *Ibid*, P. 121

<sup>729</sup> *Mahavagga* P. 355, Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362), P. 136

<sup>730</sup> The *Sarvāstivādin*, Chinese traveler of late 7<sup>th</sup> century, who visited India.

<sup>731</sup> Daswani, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 362), P. 137; Dutta 1996, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 546), P. 148

members of *bāhās* have more rules to follow than *saṅgha* members of *bahis*. *Saṅgha* operates various *guṭhīs* to run monastic functions.

*Vajrācārya Bhikṣus*, *Śākyabhikṣus*, *Brahmacārya Bhikṣus* and *Cailaka Bhikṣus* have separate *Saṅghas* of their own. In every monastery, under the *sarva Saṅgha*, the members meet like in a general meeting among themselves at least once in a year for mutual discussion and *Saṅghabhojan*, a community meal. In addition to this, all the *Vajrācārya* members of *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* meet in a council under the name *Ācārya Guṭhī* which also culminates in a *Saṅgha* meal after necessary discussion/consultation. It is mentioned that in the beginning, all the initiated *Vajrācāryas* of the three cities used to meet at a place in Śāntipur of *Svayambhū* and take part organizing national level *De ācārya guṭhī* gathering. Later, *Vajrācāryas* of a certain region began organizing such gathering within their territory. But, these-days they are limited to their own monasteries except for the *Vajrācāryas* of Kathmandu. In Kathmandu still all the *Vajrācāryas* of all the monasteries conduct annually such assembly in *Svayambhū*. Annual *Saṅgha* gathering takes place in presence of *Ājus* or *Cakreśwars*. In this way all the monastic organizations bind their members with certain monastic rules which enhance mutual support in carrying monastic functions and running the monasteries. The system is still working in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Each main *bāhā* has its own *Saṅgha* and is in this sense a closed and self-sufficient unit. Most *Saṅgha* claim descent from a common ancestor, or one of several brothers who are considered to be the founders of the *bāhā*. As membership increased over generations men who were descendants of one or other of the sons of the founder, or of one of the original brothers, were considered as belonging to one lineage (*kawa* or *kawal*). These lineages then often have duties as a group. These lineages were further subdivided in subsequent generations, but at some point of time the members of lineages became fixed, and the *Saṅgha* was ever after considered to be made up of members from fixed lineage-groups. Families continued to grow, of course, and households continued to divide, but the new divisions were called 'households' (*khalak*).

*Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* were among the group who established hundreds of monasteries (*Bāhā* and *bahis*) and thousands of *caityas* in the cliff, courtyards, fort squares and conducted their traditional functions of *Buddhist* religious affairs. They established several national heritages like *Mahānkāla* temple of Tundikhel,

*Luhmari Ajimā* temple, *Sankatā* temple etc. They bore the foundation for Nepalese folk religion, culture, tradition along with maintaining their monasticism. They comprise of a separate organizational pattern which is unparalleled and is still working. This organizational structure of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* can be looked upon in the context of modern organization.

### 11.6 *Bāhā Saṅgha* in Kathmandu

As described above in the chapter ‘Monastery-The Architectural Tradition of monasticism’, four regions of Kathmandu, called *Puis* are assorted accommodating eighteen principal monasteries along with their branches. Of the eighteen principal *bāhās*, twelve have entirely *Vajrācārya Saṅghas* and six have mixed *Saṅghas* of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*. Six monasteries having mixed *Saṅgha* are *Sikhomu bāhā*, *Makhan bāhā*, *Itum bāhā*, *Jana bāhā*, *Lagan bāhā* and *Om bāhā*. *Śākya* members of mixed *Saṅgha* are not the members of *Ācārya Guṭhī* though they are the full-fledged members of their *bāhā Saṅgha*. Also, only *Vajrācārya* becomes *cakreśvar* in such mixed *Saṅghas*.

Eighteen *Saṅghas* of eighteen principal *bāhās* are more functional and influential. There is provision of *Pañca-sthavirs* (five *sthaviras*) in most of the monasteries. The *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members of these eighteen *Saṅghas* are also the members of *De ācā gu* and their respective regional *Puiācāgu*. Each region has its own regional *Saṅgha* organization called *Pui Ācā Gu*. Patrons of the larger *Saṅghas* of *Puis* were believed to be Vākvajra of *Kwā bāhā* for *Thane Pui Ācā Gu*, Surat Vajra of *Takṣe bāhā* for *Dathu Pui Ācā Gu*, Lilāvajra of *Sikhomu bāhā* for *Lāyaku Pui*, and Manjuvajra (famous as *Jāmana: Gubhāju* meaning a *Vajrācārya* master who never took rice meal) of *Musumbāhā* (*Mani Saṅgha Mahāvihāra*) for *Kohne Pui*. All these four great *Vajrācāryas* are highly honoured as they are regarded as accomplished *Buddhist* masters and *siddhā*. They were famous not only in Nepal but also in India and Tibet. Several great deeds are assigned to them. Lilāvajra worked as gatekeeper of Vikramśīla and Nālandā *Mahāvihāra* of India. Actually, the *cakreśvars* of these four *Puis* are still considered as representation of these four great *Vajrācāryas* and are required to be present at *Svayambhū* when new *Saṅgha* members are introduced. Therefore, they were regarded as Four Pillars/Patriarchs of Nepalese *Buddhism*. From the structural organization of *Vajrācārya Saṅgha*, it

seems these four patriarchs were contemporary. But available historical accounts place them in distant separate periods.

Annual meeting of *Pui Saṅgha* members under their *Pui ācā guṭhīs* is held within their *Pui* territory on stipulated dates, on *Falgūn Śukla Dwādaśi* (12<sup>th</sup> day of brighter half of the month *Falgun*) in case of *Thathu Pui* (with five monasteries), on *Chaitra Pūrṇimā* (full moon day of the month *Chaitra*) in the case of *Dathu Pui* (with seven monasteries), on *Māgh Kriṣṇa Pratipadā* (first day of darker half of the month *Māgh*) in the case of *LāyekuPui* (with only one principal monastery) and on *Baiśākha Kriṣṇa Caturdaśi* (14<sup>th</sup> day of darker half of the month *Baiśākha*) in the case of *Kohne Pui* (with six monasteries). The gathering of *Lāyaku Pui* is called *Pohelā bhoje* as the date fall in the month of *Pohelā* (*Newārī* term for the concerned month) and members gathered in the meeting are served elegant party meal *bhoje*. *Saṅgha* members of *Lāyaku Pui* (*Sikhomu Bāhā*) have an additional gathering day called *Kayagukālā guṭhī* day. The name is derived from steamed small peanuts distributed among the members after the necessary proceedings and *pūjā* in the monastery. Apart from such regional counseling meeting, all the *Vajrācārya* members also gather on *Falgun Kriṣṇa Aṣṭami* day at Śāntipur, *Svayambhū* for their greater *De Ācā Gu* meeting. *Vajrācāryas* of eighteen principal *bāhā* monasteries have a separate organization ‘*Vajrācārya Samrakṣan Guṭhī*’ which has the objectives of supporting *De Ācā Gu* meeting and helping fellow members, preserving their identity.

### 11.7 *Bahi Saṅgha* in Kathmandu

It is already mentioned above that there are sixteen prominent *bahis* in Kathmandu. All the *bahis* belong to one over-all organization (*sarva Saṅgha*) known locally as *Śākyabhikṣu Saṅgha* or *bikhu bare Saṅgha*. Each *bahi* generally has a single elder; and the elders of the *bahis* belong to an overall-board of elders which must be present at all *bahi* initiations and which generally rules the life of the *sarva-Saṅgha* in the way the elders of each individual *bāhā* do.

*Saṅgha* members residing in *bahis* are mostly the *Śākyas*. There is a priest from *Makhan Bahi* in Kathmandu who serves as the priest for all of the *bahis* of Kathmandu. This priest must be present at *bare chuyegu* initiation, the annual festival of the *bahi* and at the *pañcadān*. There hold dual annual meetings of twenty

one elders including five authorized elders from sixteen *bahis* plus sixteen representative elders, one from each of sixteen *bahis*. This gathering is popular by the name *Chamelā Guṭhī* which holds meeting once on *Māghe sankrānti* day (first of *Māgh* month) and another on *Baiśākha Pūrṇimā* day (Full moon day of *Baiśākha*) of the year. The first meeting takes place in any one of the sixteen monasteries on rotational basis while *Tham bahi* is the venue for later meeting.<sup>732</sup> *Thambahi* is also known for its remarkable ordination program offered to *Pradhān*<sup>733</sup> (non *bare*). *Than bahi Saṅgha* operates according to *bahi Saṅgha* regulation but at present *Vajrācāryas* from *Maitripur Mahāvihāra* are looking after affairs of ordination program for the *Pradhāns*.

### 11.8 *Saṅgha* in Lalitpur

Like in Kathmandu almost all monasteries of Lalitpur has its own *Saṅgha*. There is *sarva Saṅgha de guṭhī*, the umbrella organization of *Saṅghas* of all the major monasteries of Lalitpur. Most of the *vihār Saṅgha* has composite members of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* as *Bubāhā*, *Vambāhā*, *Bhinchebāhā*, *Kwā bāhā* of Lalitpur. In some monasteries there are only *Vajrācāryas* as in monasteries like *Dhumbāhā*, *Cuka bāhā*, *Ta: bāhā*, *Daubāhā*, *Hakhābāhā*, in others there are *Śākyas* only. As members of the same monastery *Vajrācāryas* have no advantage over *Śākyas*: rights, duties, and positions of authority are determined by simple seniority. The only exception to this is that the seniormost *Vajrācārya* is called the *Cakreśvara* and is responsible for the regular worship of the principal *Tantric* deity of the monastery; he has an assistant, called a *Betāju*, who must be a *Vajrācārya* and not yet an elder of the monastery, chosen for his knowledge of ritual, who oversees the whole round of rituals in the monastery. At the apex of the *Saṅgha* is the *Thāpā āju* or *Cakreśvar*, the seniormost elder. Other elders are generally ten in number. In some *vihārs* there are only five elders, *ājus*. The elders are called *daśapārmitā Āju*, representation of ten stages (*daśabhumi*) to reach Buddhahood. The members of *Saṅgha* are assigned various roles at different stages of the organization. To be the senior members of the *Saṅgha*, one has to be qualified as required by the monastic rules. Once one is initiated he steps up the organizational ladder taking up responsibilities according to the roles and status ascribed to him. *Saṅgha* members

<sup>732</sup> Naresh Man Bajracharya, *Vajrayān Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Triratna Prakashan, 2012), P. 46

<sup>733</sup> *Pradhān* is a type of high class *Shrestha* caste, almost all of its fellow castes and sub caste are *Hindus*. Only those residing at *Than bahi* area are the *Buddhist*.

undertake the jobs of *bare chuyegu*, *ācālu yegu* for the sons of *Vajrācārya* after *bare chuyegu*, *Bisa: luyegu*, *nāye luyegu*, *cakra kāyegu*, *nyāmha Thakāli luyegu*, *cakreśvar/Thāpāju twayegu* etc.<sup>734</sup> To arrange for various functions, the *Saṅgha* choose among its members the authorized persons like *Bisa:*, *Betāju*, *Pachihā*. Other functions of *Saṅgha* are recitation of *Buddhist stotra* mainly *Nāmasangiti* in the morning, opening and tending the shrine in the morning, offering worship, accepting *pūjā* offer and doing *pūjā* on behalf of devotee who come for *pūjā* offer, evening *pūjā* and *ārati* offer. On seniority basis, holding turn of monastery functions (*Bahipā: phayegu*), *Vajrācārya* members organize *ācā gu* celebration, *diśi pūjā* performance etc. Several *guṭhīs* like *tuta guṭhī* (for *stotra* recitation), *Gūnlā pāro guṭhī* (for arranging celebrations during the month *Gūnlā*<sup>735</sup>) are established for smooth running of the monastic functions. The *guṭhīs* are so efficient that, the actions of *Saṅgha* or *guṭhī* members are spontaneous and timely according to the lunar calendar.

*Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Patan has more elaborate monastic functions, rules and regulations which are carried out sincerely and devotedly by the *Saṅgha* members. It has the largest *Saṅgha* members crossing 5000. The functions which are observed and retained only at this monastery are as follows. The *kwāpā-dyo* is tended by a boy called *bāphāchā*, who is assisted by an adult male helper and a female attendant who looks after cooking and cleaning. All the three have to abide strictly by unique monastic rules. There is the provision of extra twenty *sthaviras* in addition to ten regular *sthaviras*. For every major monastic job and deity to be served, responsibility is assigned to a *sthavira*. Likewise, a *sthavira* has to stay at the *kwāpā-dyo* shrine. Only the eldest *Vajrācārya* should do *pūjā* at the *āgaṃ* of the monastery. Two *cakreśvars* are required to stay at *āgaṃ* and *Digi*. Main *āgaṃ* is served with *pūjā* and *Gana-bhojan* rotationally by the Ten main *sthaviras* on every *Pūrṇimā* (full moon day) while such tasks are performed by twenty *sthaviras* on every *aunsi* (no moon day). There is the tradition of celebrating *Ilhane Samyak* in the interval of every five years under the aegis of this monastery. On this occasion, eighteen principal *Bāhā* monasteries, eighteen *Bahi* monasteries and the past organizers of *samyak* actively participate by displaying their *kwāpā-dyo*, *samyak-Dīpaṅkar* images, other images of *Tārā*, *Buddha*, *Bodhisattva*, *caityas* upon invitation from *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Besides, *dāna* is offered to all the

<sup>734</sup> Bajracārya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 201), P. 17

<sup>735</sup> Please refer to Monastic activities in the Chapter IX ‘Monastic life style’

*Vajrācārya*, *Śākyabhikṣus*, *Brahmacārya Bhikṣus*, *Cailaka Bhikṣus* who gather at the *samyak* venue. Likewise, *Dipankhā* festival is occasionally celebrated on special day when the five auspicious astronomical features (full moon day of *Aświn*, *Rewati pāra Aświni Nakṣetra*, *Harṣan Yoga*, Sunday and lunar eclipse) happen to be together on a day at the instigation of the monastery. The monastery has in its possession the manuscript of *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpārāmitā* of N.S. 345 in golden letters which is worshipped and recited frequently on occasions. This also has added to the fame of the monastery. Besides, other regular monastic activities are routinely observed.

### 11.9 *Bahi Saṅgha* in Lalitpur

At the present time there are theoretically 25 main *bahis* left in Patan. In some *bahis*, the *Saṅghas* have died out entirely or the *bahi* has been taken over by people from another *bahi* or a *bāhā*. There were two groups of *bahis*, one of ten and the other of fifteen *bahis* which had a similar arrangement. Each group had its own team of elders and its own priests from a *bahi*. A man from the *Saṅgha* of *Jyā bahi* functioned as the priest for the group of ten, and one from *Naka Bahi* functioned as the priest for the group of fifteen. At *Jyābā bahi* only one man was given the initiation, but at *Naka bahi* the entire *Saṅgha* was given the initiation for priestly functions. Though this original arrangement has broken down in recent years, it was still intact a hundred years ago. About four decades ago, due to a number of disputes within the group, the organization began to disintegrate. Only *Ibā Bahi* and *Khwāya bahi* have retained their old link and only they still use the services of the priest of *Jyābā bahi*. The others are now totally separate and when they have need of a priest they call a *Vajrācārya* from one of the principal *bāhās*. The priests also used to come at the time of death to read from the scriptures. Though these *bahi* priests receive the *pañcāviṣeka* (just as *Vajrācārya* do), they are not recognized as *Vajrācārya* and have no clients (*jajamān*) among the rest of the *Buddhist* population. These were often called *vajra-Bhikṣu* rather than *Vajrācārya*. They are also usually referred as *Baudhācārya*. However, all of these were *Vajrācārya* in a restricted sense. In fact the *bahi* families now also have a *Vajrācārya* priest from a *bāhā* whom they call for other family or occasional



rituals. It is known that in ancient times all the *bahis* of the valley belonged to one *sarva-Saṅgha*. Several of the Patan *Bahis* claim *Brāhmin* descent.<sup>736</sup>

“*Baudha Vihāra Saṅgha*, Lalitpur” was established in B.S. 2032 in order to coordinate among various *Buddhist Saṅghas* of Patan for better understanding in the issue of conservation and promotion of monasticism. Various programs are being run under the leadership of this *Saṅgha*.

#### 11.10 *Saṅgha* in Bhaktapur

Bhaktapur has the minimal *Buddhist* presence as compared to Kathmandu and Lalitpur. So, the number of monasteries is also less with the count of just twenty five only and the number of functional *Saṅghas* is also obviously much less. It is also seen in their tradition of becoming a celibate monk for just one day in Bhaktapur and its adjoining territories like Thimi, Banepa, Panauti etc. Among the 25 monasteries of Bhaktapur, only eleven *Mahāvihāras* and five *Bahis* can be identified existent. Four *Mahāvihāras* have exclusively *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* members. They are *Catubrahma Mahāvihāra*, *Akhandaśīla Mahāvihāra*, *Lokeśwara Mahāvihāra* and *Manjuvarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Similarly, seven *vihārs* have only *Śākyas*. They are *Indravarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Kulratna Mahāvihāra*, *Ādipadma Mahāvihāra*, *Jetvarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Jesṭhavarṇa Mahāvihāra*, *Dharmauttra Mahāvihār* and *Dharmadhātu Mahāvihār*. The last two monasteries are associated with *Indravarṇa Mahāvihāra*. Though *Saṅgha* activity in Bhaktapur is less, they have some strict additional rules which are seen no where. For example, *Vajrācārya* descendants can not perform clerical performance unless they receive *ācāryāviṣeka* and *dekhā* or *dikṣā* (higher initiation). Nowadays, *Vajrācāryas* of two influential monasteries like *Catubrahma Vihāra* and *Puśupati Mahāvihāra* are organizing annual *ācārya guṭhī*. There are arrangement of ten main elders ‘*Daśanāyak*’ who take care of *Saṅgha* tradition in Bhaktapur. The seniormost elder of *Paśupati Mahāvihār*, who receives ceremony of elder making (*sthavira luyagu*) must stay at *Dho chhen* (*Digi-chhen*, the esoteric chamber) of the monastery.<sup>737</sup>

<sup>736</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 186

<sup>737</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 698), P. 11

None of the *bahi* has a *bahi Saṅgha* today; they are looked after by *Bare* who are members of a *bāhā*. As in Kathmandu the *Saṅghas* of the *bahis* in Bhaktapur have dwindled to a tiny community often consisting of one or two initiated members.

In Thimi, *Vajrācāryas* of the monasteries of Thimi except those of *Jiswān bāhā* are the members of the *Saṅgha* of *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra*. All the *Saṅgha* members can be divided into four groups according to their lineage (*kawa*). The four groups are *Bāhā kawa*, *Inā kawa*, *Madu kawa* and *Kwā kawa*.<sup>738</sup> The *Saṅgha* activities in Thimi are under the prerogative of these four *kawas* on rotation basis, turn by turn, each turn having the tenure of mostly 4 years. But, the turn of *bāhā kawa* comes every three years as this is the large *kawa*. Each *kawa* has its own *sthavira* (*Thakāli*), thus there are four *thakālis* and the eldest among the four *kawas* is honoured as the *cakreśvar*. Non membership of *Vajrācāryas* of *Jiswān bāhā* with the *sarva Saṅgha* of Thimi is understandable from the local saying that they were actually the migrants belonging to *Cuka bāhā* of Patan. It is known that they being the *Vaidyas*, were given the task of healing in Thimi but could not return to their original place *Cuka bāhā* in Patan due to some political reasons. However, they were given special privilege of acting as *upādhyāya* in major monastic functions like *Saṅgha gathering*, *Pravajyā-samvar*, *Lokeśwara pūjā* etc. Major *Saṅgha* activities take place in presence of these elders. One of the major functions of *Saṅgha* is conducting *pravajyā* for the neophytes. Though there are eight existing *Vihāras*, this function is being carried out currently only in three *Vihāras*. In Thimi, all the *Saṅgha* members are *Vajrācāryas*. Few *Śākyas* of present time are the recent migrants who settled there. Their descendants are being ordained at *Hiranyavarṇa Mahāvihāra* of Thimi. *Vajrācāryas* of Bhaktapur and Thimi still have their *Ācārya guṭhī*.

#### 11.11 *Vajrācārya, Śākyas, as the House holder monks*

Long ago, Brian Hodgson mentioned five categories of monastics or monks constituting the congregation of the faithful or only real *Buddhists* in Nepal. They were *Bhikṣus* (mendicants), *Śrāvaks* (readers), *Cailakas* (the scantily robed), *Arhats* (adepts) and *Vajrācāryas* (*ācārya*, teachers).<sup>739</sup> They are collectively called

<sup>738</sup> Dharmasunder Bajracharya, *Thimi Deya Bāhā wa Vajrācārya Saṅgha (Monasteries and Vajrācārya Saṅgha of Thimi)*, (Thimi: Madhyapur Thimi Vajrācārya Saṅgha, 2004), P. 34

<sup>739</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 30

*Bandya*<sup>740</sup> which exists today as *Bare*- a derivative form of *Bandya*. The word *Bandya* is the honorific name given to *Buddhamārgi* because his followers make *vandana* (salutation) in his reverence for his proficiency of knowledge. Whoever has adopted the tenets of *Buddha*, and has cut off the lock from the crown of his head, of whatever tribe or nation he be, becomes thereby a *Bandya*. *Bandyas* is simply divided into two classes- those who follow the *Vāhya-caryā* and those who adopt the *Abhyantara-caryā*- the words equivalent to the *Grihastha āśrama* and *Vairāgi āśram* of *Brāhmans*. The first class is denominated *Bhikṣu*, and the second, *Vajrācārya*.<sup>741</sup> The *Bhikṣu* can not marry where as the *Vajrācārya* is a family man. The *Vajrācārya* is he who has a wife and children and devotes himself to the active ministry of *Buddhism*. This specification became unjustifiable after conversion of all *Bandyas* into householder monks in Medieval period.

The holy order of *Newār* monasticism is now a caste- *Bare*: it is now made up of two subsections or status groups, the *Vajrācārya* and the *Śākyas*. *Bare* claimed to be the direct descendant of the medieval monks and the principal custodians of the *Buddhist* tradition; most of them still live in or around monasteries. Total percentage of *Bare* including both *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* is mentioned as 10% of the *Newār* population with the greatest concentration in Patan.<sup>742</sup> They dwell mostly in or in the vicinity of the monasteries in Kathmandu, Lalitpur and Bhaktapur and adjoining old urban areas. All the *bare* including both groups are counted as *Saṅgha*, a *Saṅskrit* word which means celibate monastic order. Therefore, *Bare* may be said to be practicing *Buddhist* monastics in so far they are members of well organized associations (*Saṅghas*) based on the possession of specifically *Buddhist* sacra, maintain and administer *Buddhist* shrines (*Bāhā* and *Bahi*), and provide the general public with an opportunity to gain merit by performing *pūjā* by making offerings to the main *Bāhā* divinities.<sup>743</sup> So, *Brāhmins*, *Śākyas*, *Vajrācāryas*, kings, monks and revered ascetics are addressed with honorific auxiliary ‘*bijyāye*’.<sup>744</sup> They are not true monks but both “monks” and “householders” and so are called *Bhikṣu-grahastha* who adopted the state of monkhood on the religious level as merely an elementary stage that must be passed

---

<sup>740</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>741</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>742</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.*(f.n. 108),P. 19

<sup>743</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 31

<sup>744</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 43

through as one progresses towards Enlightenment.<sup>745</sup> *Vajrācāryas* are regarded as scholars and teaching priests while *Śākyas* as semi priests. Apart from being *Bhikṣus* they are also considered *gurus* (teachers) as they have undergone higher initiations required for priests of a higher order.<sup>746</sup> *Vajrācāryas* have the hereditary right to practice as *Purohits* or family priests.

*Newār Buddhist* monastics have differing attitude towards the achievement of liberation. They do not demand that one abandon the social world for the attainment of deliverance. The *Bare* rejects ascetic renunciation, and become supra-human beings who have passed beyond the impotence and suffering of ordinary existence through the adoption of the opposite of renunciation, namely the celebration of earthly pleasures and through the sacrificial enjoyment of all that is normally rejected and condemned by *Buddhist* monks: alcohol, meat, fish, and ritual copulation.<sup>747</sup> Though the goal is same for both celibate monks and *Bare*, the monks attempt to attain it by disengaging himself from all that is human, social and physical and by suppressing and extinguishing all passions, emotion, and human attachments while the *Bare* attempt to attain it by the ritual use of *tantric* reversals through celebration of earthly pleasures. So, the monk's way is the rejection of the social world, its rules and conventions and so is personal and unstructured where as the *Bare* reject the concept of ascetic renunciation as well as the exaltation of the unstructured and the liminal.<sup>748</sup>

*Bare* as highly structured and hierarchical social system following elaborate and complicated ritual procedures which are difficult to master and to perform. To be *Bare* is justified in terms of *Karma*: those who led lives guided by honesty and righteousness win the right to be born not only as mortals but as *Bare*. All male *Bare* must be incorporated into the caste of *Bare* and this is accomplished when the boys are made symbolic monks through a ceremony of ordination called *Bare chhuyigu*. There is the assumption that all are thought to be born impure, but only some men are then purified through a series of special ceremonies (*samskāra*) which included *Bare chhuyigu* and all other rites or ceremonies conferred to *Bare*. Purity therefore is seen as being derivative of purificatory ceremonies/rites and not

---

<sup>745</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36), Pp. 129-149.

<sup>746</sup> Leinhard, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 8), Pp. 110-111

<sup>747</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36), P. 134

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid*,

as a natural state. Therefore, the *Bare* is considered high caste rank because they undergo the largest number of such rites among the *Buddhist Newārs* and thus they alone have removed the taint and impurities of the natural and physical and they alone have been rendered fit for the pursuit of the sacred.

#### 11.11.1 *Śākyas*

Unlike *Vajrācāryas*, *Śākya* men may not be priests for others, but together with *Vajrācārya* men they are the members of the traditional *Newār Buddhist Saṅgha*. In so far as *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* men perform their roles as the members of *Buddhist Saṅgha* in the monastery, they are monks. In effect, they were married, part-time monks. Since, they also have scriptural knowledge and can perform as priests in the monasteries though they are not socially allowed to act as priests outside, they can be called semi priests.

The *Śākya* community was classed into different categories during medieval period. Depending upon slight variation in mode of ordination *Śākyas* are further sub grouped into *Sakyābhikṣu* or *Śākyavamaśa*, *Brahmacārya bhikkhu*, *Cailak bhikkhu*, *Buddhācārya* and *sākhā Śākyabhikṣu*. *Cailaka Bhikṣu* are those who are initiated as *Buddhist* monks in front of a *caitya*.<sup>749</sup> Those who have *pravajyā* at *Svayambhū* are called *Buddhācārya*.<sup>750</sup> As there is a tendency in modern times to homogenization of caste names, so what used to be subgroups like *Brahmacārya Bhikṣu*, *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Śākyavamaśa* are all *Śākya* today. Those who have it in a *bahi* are called *Brahmacāri Bhikṣu*.<sup>751</sup> Those who have *pravajyā* in a *bāhā* are called *Sakyābhikṣu* or *Śākyavamaśa*. Those who have it done in a *kacā bāhā* are called *sākhā Śākyabhikṣu* or simply *Śākya*.<sup>752</sup> But the present *Buddhist Saṅgha* ignore these divisions and all is treated as *Śākya*.

It is evident that *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* have gone a series of changes before they got established as the castes which are in vogue currently. There is a strong belief among the *Śākyas* and other *Buddhist* scholars that *Śākya* were the migrants from

<sup>749</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 21-23

<sup>750</sup> Pandit Ashakaji Bajracharya, *The Daśakarma Vidhi*, (Kathmandu: Maṇḍala Book Point, 2010), P. 47

<sup>751</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 21

<sup>752</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 750), P. 47

Kaplilvastu and were *Buddha's* clan, their mass migration is related to massacre of *Śākyas* through the hands of Virudhak during *Buddha's* time. *Śākyas* still take the pride in being the kin of the *Buddha*. Renowned historian, Dhanavajra writes that in the beginning, those from *Śākya* dynasty, who became monks were the *Śākyabhikṣus*, but later all *Buddhist* monks were called *Śākyabhikṣus*.<sup>753</sup> This version of Dhanavajra seems unreasonable on the ground that *Śākyabhikṣu* made appearance in the history with the development of *Mahāyāna* after fourth century only confirming that they were the *Mahāyāna* monks. Now they are married *Buddhist* practitioners accepted socially as the house holder monks (*grihastha Bhikṣus*). They were called *Śākyabhikṣus* in *Lichchavī* and Medieval period. Recently, some *Śākyas* have begun writing *Śākyabhikṣu* or *Śākyavaṃśa* as surname to glorify their status. But *Buddhist* history in Nepal and India tells us that *Śākyabhikṣus* were the *Mahāyāna Bhikṣus*. They could equally be *Mahāsāṃghikā* or *Sarvāstivādin* monks but for sure not the *Theravādin* monks.<sup>754</sup> Irrespective of castes, any monks who joined *Mahāyāna* pantheon became *Śākyabhikṣu*. The study does not reveal for certainty that *Śākya* man was *Śākyabhikṣu* as assumed by some scholars like Dhanavajra Vajrācārya.<sup>755</sup> There are inscriptions from *Lichchavī* period like *Te bāhā* inscription<sup>756</sup> (of 7<sup>th</sup> century) mentioning about Priyapāl *Śākyabhikṣu* establishing water well and spout dedicating to Triple gems wishing welfare of his parents and *Cā bahil* inscription about *Śākyabhikṣu* Bandhubhadra mentioning about his generous deeds. From the inscription of Lalitpur *Guita Bahi* (of N.S. 144, probably the period of king Laxmikamadeva), *Śākyabhikṣu* named *Śrī Shubhashri* is known to have donated for the pavement of the ground of *Śrī Saptapuri Mahāvihāra* established by *Mahā-Paṇḍit Śākyabhikṣu Śrī Gautamśrī*.<sup>757</sup> *Mahā-Paṇḍits* were those who earned fame in foreign lands especially Tibet and India.<sup>758</sup> Similarly, several medieval colophons provide references not only to *Śākyabhikṣus* but also *Śākyabhikṣuṇīs*. We have already discussed about *Bhikṣuṇīs* (of *Ārya Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha*) in earlier chapters.<sup>759</sup> *Bhikṣuṇī* tradition totally died out in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. An early medieval colophon of the scripture *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*

<sup>753</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), P. 38

<sup>754</sup> For other details, Please see the chapter VIII Sectarian influences-the Evolutionary factors in Buddhism of *Nepal-maṇḍala* and Chapter VII History of Monasticism in Nepal-maṇḍala

<sup>755</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 455

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid*, Pp.454-455

<sup>757</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), P. 37

<sup>758</sup> *Ibid*, P. 38

<sup>759</sup> Chapter VII- History of Buddhism in *Nepal-maṇḍala* and Chapter VIII- Sectarian Influence

*Prajñāpārāmitā* (of early 10<sup>th</sup> century, N.S. 28) mentions about *Śākya Bhikṣuṇī* Sthaviraini Akshyayamati of *Mahāwatischal Vihāra*, Mahāboudha, Okubāhāl, Thaina.<sup>760</sup> No doubt, she was a celibate nun as the word *Sthaviraini* confirms. Similarly, a colophon of *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā tikā* (N.S. 202, A.D. 1082) mentions about *Śākyabhikṣuṇī* Yemendranathaya of *Śrī Indramulasthana* sponsoring writing of the scripture at *Śrī Chakavarti Mahādevi Mahāvihāra*.<sup>761</sup> Some examples of *Śākyabhikṣus* from medieval colophons are *Śākyabhikṣu* Harshagupta from the scripture *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* (Time N.S. 159)<sup>762</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Kumarachandra of *Padmacakra Mahāvihāra* from the scripture *Chatupithanibandha* (N.S. 165)<sup>763</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Sthavira Prathama Gupta from the scripture ‘*Baudhadoṣakośa*’ (N.S. 212)<sup>764</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī Jivajra, *Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī Anantarajā and *Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī Runjintasigu from ‘*Kārandavyuha Mahāyāna Sūtrarāja*’ (10<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>765</sup> at *Manjuśrī Naka Vihāra*, *Śākyabhikṣu* Ratnagupta of Jumalaka from *Nāmasangiti* (N.S. 256)<sup>766</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Varmana who copied ‘*Saptisahti chandi*’ (N.S. 264)<sup>767</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Manjuśrī from ‘*Aṣṭasāhashrikā Prajñāpārāmitā*’ (N.S. 285)<sup>768</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī Abhayasen from *Paramārthanāmasangiti*<sup>769</sup>, *Śākyabhikṣu* Sthavira Chandana-bhadra from ‘*Siddhāikaveeramahā tantra*’ (around 380 N.S.)<sup>770</sup> and so forth.<sup>771</sup> Such references are also available from Medieval inscriptions. For example *Mahā Paṇḍit Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī Gautam, and *Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī ShubhaŚrī are known from the inscription (N.S. 144)<sup>772</sup> of *Saptapuri Mahāvihāra* (*Guita bahi*). They contributed to the construction of the *Vihāra*. Likewise, copper inscription (N.S. 511) of *U-bāhābahi* (*Jaya Manohar Mahāvihāra*) mentions *Śākyabhikṣu* Śrī

<sup>760</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Pp. 8-9

<sup>761</sup> *Ibid*, P. 61; Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 47, Cakravati Monastery is mentioned modern Na bāhā, also known a Caka Bāhā-bahi.

<sup>762</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Pp. 33-35,

<sup>763</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 37-38; Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 40

<sup>764</sup> *Ibid*, P. 66

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid*, P. 77,

<sup>766</sup> *Ibid*, P. 87,

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 94-95. It seems peculiar as the text copied belongs to *Hindu* religion.

<sup>768</sup> *Ibid*, P. 111,

<sup>769</sup> *Ibid*, P. 158,

<sup>770</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 169-70,

<sup>771</sup> The list is based on the text Medieval Colophon of Hariram Joshi. The list could be longer if other sources are also considered.

<sup>772</sup> Hariram Joshi, “Medieval Inscriptions” in *Ancient Nepal*, Journal of the Department of Archaeology, edited by Ramesh Jung Thapa, bimonthly, No. 53-56, Aug. 79-March 1980, Inscription S.N. 6, P. 11

Jayachandan along with other *Bhikṣus* like *BhikṣuŚrī* Jayasingha Bir Bhadra, *BhikṣuŚrī* Rājñāyakahansa and *ācārya* Subodhijiva. This inscription and some other inscriptions and colophons show that there were separate groups of monks who were called *Śākyabhikṣus* and other *Bhikṣus*. Several inscriptions like those of Patan *SuBāhāl*<sup>773</sup> of 666 N.S which speaks about *ŚākyabhikṣuŚrī* Chandrasingha, of Patan Pulchowk<sup>774</sup> big *caitya* mentioning about *ŚākyabhikṣuŚrī* Rāju, and so forth testify the prominence of *Śākyabhikṣus* in monastic affairs. The *Bhikṣu* who did not use the title *Śākyabhikṣu* could be celibate *Vajrācārya* or *Bhikṣus* of other traditions like *Mahāsāṃghikā* or *Sarvāstivādins*. *Buddhist ācārya* or *Paramācārya* as shown by colophon of the scripture *Uṣṇiṣ Vijaya Dhāraṇī* (N.S 88, A.D. 967) was obviously *Vajrācārya*. Many *ācāryas* of *Lichchavī* and early Medieval period like Śāntikarācārya, *ācārya* Bandudatta, *ācārya* Kuladatta, *ācārya* Darpaṇācārya, *ācārya* Anupamvajra were regarded as *Vajrācārya*. Some scholars assert that *Bhikṣurācārya* was the earlier term used for *Vajrācārya*.<sup>775</sup> The assumption that they (*Bhikṣus*) could be *Vajrācārya* can be verified from the Medieval colophon of *Kriyā Saṃgraha pañjikā* (N.S. 373, A.D. 1309))<sup>776</sup> which mentions *Bhikṣu Vajrācārya* Veeramati.<sup>777</sup> In yester-years, *Vajrācārya* were mentioned either as only *Bhikṣu* as in the cases of Colophon of *Pañcaraksā* (N.S. 296 ?)<sup>778</sup> mentioning the copier *Bhikṣu* Padmasri Bhadra, of *Dharma Samuccaya* (N.S. 293)<sup>779</sup> mentioning *Bhikṣu* Pujita ŚrīJnāna etc or clearly *Vajrācārya Bhikṣu* as shown by the colophon of ‘*Nispannayogāvali*’ (N.S. 356, A.D. 1217-1218)<sup>780</sup> which mentions *Kāyastha Vajrācārya Bhikṣu* Jnānarakṣita.<sup>781</sup> Such assumption was also made by Father John K. Locke. He assumed that *Bhikṣu* Ravindra or *Ācārya Sthavira* Ravendradeva of the *Mānadeva Mahāvihāra* known from the colophon of *Pañcarakṣā* dated N.S. 183(1063 A.D) to be *Vajrācārya* considering the type of the text he copied.<sup>782</sup> Similarly, for the same ground, *Paṇḍit Bhikṣu* Prajñākarapāda

<sup>773</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P.10

<sup>774</sup> *Ibid*, P. 21

<sup>775</sup> Yajnamanapati Bajracarya, “*Vajrācārya*: Pulupālu (*Vajrācārya*: A glance)” in *Paleswān*, Issue 13, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 1998), Pp. 22-24

<sup>776</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), P. 163,

<sup>777</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 85

<sup>778</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), P. 119

<sup>779</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 115-116,

<sup>780</sup> *Ibid*, P. 156,

<sup>781</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 83

<sup>782</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 480; Joshi, *Op.cit.* (279), Colophon No. 35, Pp. 39-40; Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 45



who composed *Bodhicaryāvatāra Tikā*<sup>783</sup> in 11<sup>th</sup> century and *Mahā Paṇḍit* Mahāsukha Vajrapāda who wrote *Chandra Mahārośan Tantra* (N.S. 417) were *Vajrācāryas*. The *Paṇḍit* of *Vajrayāna* or *vajra* vehicle is *Vajrācārya*. Here, the quotation of Pt. Ashakaji *Vajrācārya* becomes relevant. “*Yaddhā vajramārgeṇa deśakayo vā ācāryya: so Vajrācāryya: /*”.<sup>784</sup> The colophon of *Niṣpannayogāvali* (N.S. 356) mentioned above also shows that *Vajrācārya* title was obtainable by any desirous practitioner as here a *Kāyastha* had become *Vajrācārya Bhikṣu*. This issue will be discussed with further example in the following paragraph. Before conversion to the caste, *Śākyabhikṣu* was used as honorific title as in the case of *Vajrācārya. Bahis* are the main dwelling place of *Śākyas*.<sup>785</sup> However, *Śākyavamśa* is sometimes highlighted instead of *Śākyabhikṣu*. A copper inscription of Kathmandu *Nhyāyakan Bahi* of 508 N.S. shows the individuals like *Śrī* Manachandra, son of *Sthavira* Rangachandra, his brother Harsharam, his son Gyanchandra to be *Śākyavamśa* taking part in *Buddhist* activities.<sup>786</sup> Similarly, there are several other inscriptions bearing name of *Śākyavamśa*, for example- inscriptions like those of Patan Nakabahil Athanani inscription<sup>787</sup> of 716 N.S in *Kwāpādyo* shrine that mentions about *Śākyavamśa Śrī* Bhisingh establishing gilded *Buddha* image, and of Patan Khwāybahil big *caitya* inscription<sup>788</sup> of 734 N.S that mentions about *Śākyavamśa Śrī* Vijayadeva in the team of renovation of the *caitya*, and of Patan *Yabutole Guhya bāhāl* inscription<sup>789</sup> of 759 N.S, stuck in *Kwāpā-dyo* shrine wall that tells about installation of various gilded *Buddhist* images along with *torāṇa* by *Śākyavamśa Śrī* Devaju and others.

Likewise, there were some *Śākyā* monastics who preferred to be called *Brahmacarya Bhikṣus* as revealed by some medieval inscriptions. Patan *Guitabahi* inscription<sup>790</sup> of 1514 A.D (of Ratnamalla period) mentions about *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* Jakharāj and his wife who installed *Mahākāla* image in the monastery in memory of their late son, Vijayasinha *Bhāro*. Literally, *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* means celibate monk. But, here the protagonist was a married man with a son. The

<sup>783</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Pp. 59-60,

<sup>784</sup> Ashakaji (Ganesha Raj) Bajracharya, *Bodhisattvāvanamālā*, Part III, (Kathmandu: Nepal Baudha Prakashan, N.S. 1105), P. 11a.

<sup>785</sup> Please see the chapter X ‘Monastery-the Architectural tradition in monasticism’.

<sup>786</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), Inscription No. 59, Pp. 177-79

<sup>787</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 43

<sup>788</sup> *Ibid*, P. 49-50

<sup>789</sup> *Ibid*, P. 79-80

<sup>790</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 1-2

inscription clearly shows that he was a householder but was from dynasty of celibate monks. It makes clear that by the period celibate monks had been turned into house holder practitioners but they took pride in being celibate monks in the past. An another stone inscription<sup>791</sup> of 1643 A.D, of Patan *Kwā Bāhāl tole Chobunani* mentions about installation of *Dharmadhātu Vagiśwara* by a *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu* named *Śrī Narendradeva* while his father was mentioned as just *Bhikṣu Śrīdeva*. It may have indicated that the father joined later the celibate *Bhikṣu* community or the word *Brahmacarya* got missing. There are several other inscriptions from late medieval time mentioning about monastics who were addressed as *Bhikṣu*, *Śākyavamśa*, *Brahmacarya Bhikṣu*, *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Vajrācārya*.

Nowadays, *Śākyas* have their organization, *Śākya Samāj* established for the welfare of *Śākyas* in both secular and non secular dimensions.

#### 11.11.2 Interrelationship between *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*

There is an interesting record of formation of *Śākyas* in Nepal. If sons or descendants of *Vajrācārya* somehow fail to receive or avoid *Ācāryābhiṣeka*, they remain as *Śākyas*. Local people knew that there are such *Śākyas* generated from *Vajrācārya* clan, who did not receive *Ācāryābhiṣeka* and remained as *Śākyas* in *Makhan Bāhā* and *Jana bāhā*. Similarly, there is also a record of promotion of *Śākyas* to *Vajrācārya* status through a royal order which permitted a *Śākya* to receive *ācāryābhiṣeka* and became *Vajrācārya*. During *Rānā* regime when Amritananda *Śākya* of Patan, the great friend of Brian H. Hodgson became popular and his approach to Palace grew, he was converted to *Vajrācārya* while his half brother Sundarananda remained *Śākya* for ever.<sup>792</sup> Therefore, *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* are interconnected and interchangeable. Still they are consanguinial groups and their intermarriage is freely allowed by their society. Both fall under the group *Bare* or *Bandya*. Later, *Bare* in local sense took meaning that it is more *Śākya* than *Vajrācārya* as it is linked to *bare chuyigu* rite which is sufficient for the *Śākyas*. One must be the *Śākya* before being *Vajrācārya* and vice versa is true for

<sup>791</sup> *Ibid*, P. 92

<sup>792</sup> Amritananda was mentioned as *Śākya* by Hodgson, and later *Vajrācārya* by Oldfield in Sketches of Nepal.

being *Śākya*. In other words, it can be said that all *Vajrācāryas* are *Śākyas* but not all *Śākyas* are *Vajrācārya*.

### 11.11.3 *Vajrācārya*

Currently, a *Vajrācārya* or *Bajrācārya* is better known as a *Vajrayāna Buddhist* master or priest among the *Newār* communities of Nepal. *Vajrācārya* means 'vajra holding priest'. The word priest is interchangeably used for the monk.<sup>793</sup> They are also commonly called *Guru-ju* or *Gu-bhāju* (a short form for *Guru Bhāju*) which are Nepali terms related to the *Saṅskrit* term *guru*, and is translated as 'teacher' or 'priest'. They were also known to have been called '*Guru Bharāḍa*'.<sup>794</sup> A *Vajrācārya* is the highest rank of the *Newār* castes that are born *Buddhist*. A *Vajrācārya* boy goes through a ritualistic process of initiation known as *Pravajyā*, including shaving off the head as the *Buddha* and asking for alms, at a minimum of seven houses a day in different places, in the tradition of monks since the time of *Gautama Buddha*, followed by *ācāryāviṣeka*<sup>795</sup> which labels him a true *Vajrācārya* with all the rights mainly the authority to officiate as a household priest, a duty he will perform not only for his families, but for the *Śākyas* and lay *Buddhists*. A *Vajrācārya* should know at least worshiping procedure, recitation skill, story telling skill etc. He should also know additional skill like making sculpture, carpentry, masonry, painting, singing *caryā* songs (*cacā*) and performing *caryā* dance.<sup>796</sup> To become a professional *Guraju*, a person of the *Vajrācārya* caste must go through a number other higher initiations and rituals according to *vajrayānic* tradition. Beside these mandatory ritualistic requirements, he undertakes pursuit of gaining knowledge on *Buddhism*, meditate and disseminate his knowledge to the laity. He also requires to perform *Bodhisattva-caryā* working selflessly for the benefit of others. A *vajrācārya* combines within himself the roles of teacher

---

<sup>793</sup> R. Spence Hardy, *Eastern Monachism, An Account of the origin, laws, Disciplines, Sacred Writings, Mysterious rites, Religious Ceremonies, and Present Circumstances of the Order of Mendicants founded by Gotama Buddha and Review of Monastic System*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860); Gombrich, Richard F. *Buddhist precept and Practice*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Reprint 2008)

<sup>794</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 296), P. 359

<sup>795</sup> "A Brief Introduction of Distinctive Features of Nepalese *Buddhism*".2002.  
<http://www.bajracharya.org/nepaliBuddhism.htm>. Retrieved 2008-07-27.

<sup>796</sup> Bajracārya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 775). For details, please refer to *Kriyāsamuccaya*

(*Guru*), priest of all kinds and also other roles as astrologer, patron etc. Actually a person becomes *Vajrācārya* on cultural, behavioural basis, and words spoken.<sup>797</sup>

#### 11.11.3.1 Qualities of *Vajrācārya*

Essential qualities and qualification of a *Vajrācārya* are given under *Ācārya Lakṣana vidhi* chapter in the acclaimed *Buddhist* text *Ācārya Kriyāsamuccaya* authored by Jagadarpanachārya of early medieval period.<sup>798</sup> *Samvarodaya Tantra* also has description of the characteristics of the *Vajrācārya* or *vajra* master which place him in high status. They have liberty of following blameless professions only to earn their livelihood as mentioned in *Ārya-aṣṭāṅgic mārṅa* of Four Noble truths propounded by the *Buddha*.

*Vajrācārya* is a teacher whose responsibility is to find out the right means of his pupil. The *Ācārya Kriyāsamuccaya* (the work of Jagadarpanacharya) defines in the qualities of an *ācārya*. One who shows the path of conduct of this world and of the next, the *ācārya*: *laukikalokottarācāram darśayatityācāryaḥ*. One who takes away from the unrighteous practices, is not affected by any gain or loss, fame or defame, censure or compliment, whose intellect has been augmented by his passive attitude towards pleasure and pain, he also takes interest in the *mantras*, is possessed of courage, skill and compassion, is bereft of jealousy and desires, knows the essence of the things of the world, has attained eminence and finally, he who is full of intellect, is the *ācārya*.<sup>799</sup> The real teacher is he, who apart from other qualities, does not live like a monk, does not shave his head and puts on good clothes and beautiful ornaments. Amongst other qualities of a teacher are counted his knowledge about purificatory rites, his kind disposition, forbearing attitude, pleasing humour, maintenance of all the *ācāras* (moral conduct), insight in the art of architecture and in the science of the *mantras*, skill as a profound astronomer knowing all the beneficial moments and prosperous constellations and his capability to select an auspicious plot for the construction of a stupa and for the installation of the idol of the *Buddha*.

<sup>797</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 60-63

<sup>798</sup> Saddharmaraj Bajracharya, (Tr). *Ācārya Kriyāsamuccaya*, unpublished, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 2062),

<sup>799</sup> For full text in original *Sanskrit*, please see *Ācārya-lakṣana-vidhi*, the first section of *Kriyāsamuccaya*, given in Appendix.

Similarly, *Samvarodaya tantra* defines *Vajrācārya* as a man who has subdued his passions, whose appearance is tranquil, who have sympathy for all living beings, who knows the practice of *mantras* and *tantras*, who is compassionate and who is learned in treatises, who talks sweetly to everybody, who treats all living beings as his own son, who always takes pleasure in almsgiving and is engaged in *yoga* and *dhyāna*-meditation, who speaks the truth, who does not injure living beings, and whose mind is compassionate and intent upon benefitting others and so forth.<sup>800</sup>

### 11.11.3.2 Origin of *Vajrācārya*

Before establishment as *Vajrācārya*, they were called simply *Ācārya* (in *Vajrayāna* discipline), and sometimes *Bhikṣurācārya* as exemplified by colophon of *Mitapadapañjikā* (N.S 261, A.D. 1141)<sup>801</sup> which mentions about *Bhikṣurācārya* Suvarṇabhadra and colophon of *Satasāhasrikā Prajñāpārāmīta* (Vol.3, N.S. 404, A.D. 1284)<sup>802</sup> which has a record of *Bhikṣurācārya Kāyastha* Sugata and are singled out as a specialized group in Nepal. This colophon furnishes further proof of becoming *Vajrācārya* from *Kāyastha* class confirming the assumption that any body can enter into this group after having proved their qualities of *ācāryahood*, irrespective of caste and creed. It is remarkable that *Brāhmins* entered into *Vajrācārya* group and they tried to introduce themselves as the separate group parallel to *Vajrācārya*, called *Kulīśācārya*. After the appearance of *Śākyabhikṣu* in 6<sup>th</sup> century, *Vajrācārya* also emerged. Still one has to pass the phase of *Śākyabhikṣu* before being *Vajrācārya*. Reference of legendary Śāntikarācārya, *Ācārya Śīlāmanju*, *Ācārya Bandhudutta*, *Ācārya Anangavajra* of 7<sup>th</sup> century, *Ācārya Buddhakīrti* of 8<sup>th</sup> century show prevalence of *Vajrācāryas* in ancient time mainly *Lichchavī* period.<sup>803</sup> *Bodhisattva Manjuśrī* is regarded as the first *Vajrācārya* initiating *Buddhist ācārya* tradition. He took the form of *Manjudeva* *Ācārya* to complete his ambitious task of converting Kathmandu valley to beautiful human inhabitable site. *Iti Dhyatvā viniścītya Manjuśrī: sajinatmaja:/ Manjudevabhīdhācāruryarupam Dhṛitvā maharddhimān //* meaning- *Manjuśrī*

<sup>800</sup> S. Tsuda, *The Samvarodaya-Tantra: Selected Chapters*, (Tokyo: Yokuseido Press, 1974), P.294

<sup>801</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 59. The manuscript was copied at Jayamnohar *Mahāvihāra*, i.e. *Subāhāh* of Patan.; Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Colophon No, 96Pp. 191-192,

<sup>802</sup> Petech, *Ibid*, P. 97; Joshi, *Ibid*, Colophon No. 237, P. 183

<sup>803</sup> For details, please see chapter VII 'History of Buddhist monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*' in the heading *Lichchavī* period.

*Bodhisattva* on meditation changed himself his name as *Manjudeva Ācārya* and got converted to *Mahāparākramī* (great hero) *ācārya*.<sup>804</sup> He is mentioned as *ŚrīManjusri Vajrācārya* in *Svayambhū purāṇa*.<sup>805</sup> *Ācārya Sāntikar* is regarded as the progenitor of *Vajrācārya* clan in Nepal. Procedure of becoming a *Vajrācārya* is still in congruence with its first incidence in regard to the first supposed *Vajrācārya Śrī Sāntikarācārya*. According to *Svayambhū purāṇa*, the king Prachandradeva who hailed from Gaudha to the valley to pay *homage* to the self emanating *Svayambhū jyotirūpa*, thought to become *ācārya* in order to cover freely exposed light. Therefore, he first received *Sanḡha* membership from *Guru Guṇākar*, the disciple of *Bodhisattva Manjuśrī* and became *Bhikṣu ŚāntiŚrī*. After being a *Bhikṣu* for some time, he took further initiation from the *Guru* to be converted into *Vajrācārya* and he turned into *Sāntikarācārya*.<sup>806</sup> He then covered the *Svayambhū* flame with his *tantric* wit. This procedure of first being a *Bhikṣu* and then receiving further initiation to turn into *Vajrācārya* is still followed in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

Some scholars held the view that *Vajrācāryas* are the special *Buddhist* practitioners extant indigenously only in Nepal.<sup>807</sup> But this is not true. *Vajrācārya* existed in India, Tibet (now China), Nepal, Ceylon etc. Actually, the regions where *Vajrayāna* form of *Buddhism* prevailed, have *Vajrācārya* practitioners. It is also revealed from the mention of Wadell in his *Lāmaism* which states- “In the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the tantric phase developed in Northern India, Kaśmir, and Nepal,... the *Kāla-cakra*, with its demoniacal *Buddhas*, which incorporated the *Mantrayāna* practices, and called itself the *Vajrayāna* or the ‘Thunderbolt Vehicle’, and its followers were named *Vajrācārya* or the ‘followers of the Thunderbolt’”.<sup>808</sup> The very term *Vajrācārya* was retained in India, Nepal and Tibet. In Japan, *Bonzo* are equivalent to *Vajrācārya*. Many foreign *Vajrācāryas* had worked in Nepal. There is a reference through a colophon of the scripture *Cakrasamvara tantra* (of 9<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>809</sup> that an Ceylonese *Ācārya* Jayabhadra worked in Nepal. There was two way flow of *Vajrācāryas* between India and Nepal. Nepalese Advayavajra,

<sup>804</sup> Shakyas and Bajracarya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 169), P. 61

<sup>805</sup> *Ibid*, P. 70

<sup>806</sup> *Svayambhūpurāṇa*

<sup>807</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 775), P. 19

<sup>808</sup> Austine L. Wadell, *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet* (1894), (Kathmandu: Educational Enterprises, 1985), P. 15

<sup>809</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), Pp. 5-7,

Mahākaruṇā, Vāgisvarakīrti, Kuladatta etc. were famous *Vajrācāryas* in India and Tibet. Many *Vajrācāryas* were among the renowned *siddhās*. But the earliest record of very word *Vajrācārya* appears in Nepal with reference dated N.S. 178 from the colophon of *Āryavajrodhaka* preserved at National Archive, which mentions about its author *Mahā Vajrācārya Anandagarbha*.<sup>810</sup> The prefix *Mahā* meaning great used in *Vajrācārya* gives clear indication that *Vajrācārya* was a title of status given to high ranked *Buddhist* practitioner. It was used as *Mahā Paṇḍit*. After this reference several stray earlier references to *Vajrācārya* as authors of texts appeared.

Medieval colophons reveal that the most influential religions in medieval period were *Vajrayāna Buddhism* and *Śaivism*. Most of the *Lichchavī* rulers except few were themselves *śaivists* and *Malla* rulers were either *śaivist* or *śākta* or *vaiṣṇuvists*. But majority of denizens had remained *Buddhists* and due to this the rulers were compelled to have soft leaning/corner towards *Buddhism* to maintain religious harmony. It is often said- the rulers of Far West Nepal i.e. the *Khasa* kingdom were *Buddhists* and the people non *Buddhist* whereas in the Kathmandu valley or *Nepal-maṇḍala* the rulers were either *Śaivist* or *Vaisnuvist* but the people *Buddhist*. The highest class of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* was *Vajrācārya* while that of *Śaivism* was *Śaivācārya* as shown by the colophons of the texts like *Kadibhedo Kubjikāmātam*<sup>811</sup> and *Kumarī pūjā vidhāna* (N.S. 406).<sup>812</sup> Sometimes, another distinguished class was also mentioned like *brāhmaṇa Paṇḍitācārya*, as evidenced by colophon of the manuscript *Amrteśvara pūjā* (A.D. 1216) which belonged to non *Buddhist* arena.<sup>813</sup> Currently there is no one with title or caste *Śaivācārya*. Therefore, disappearance of *Śaivācārya* in later Medieval period and proliferation of *Vajrācāryas* also justify the popularity of *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

#### 11.11.4 Monastic Identity of *Vajrācāryas*, and *Śākyas*

Monastic status begins with Monastic initiation in which *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* boys spend four days as monks.<sup>814</sup> *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* as hereditary monks and

<sup>810</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>811</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 130-131,

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid*, P. 186,

<sup>813</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), Pp. 81-82

<sup>814</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 58

their status as the monks are in fact a crucial part of traditional *Newār Buddhism*. They, of course, are more than monks, always working for the benefit of others, motivated by *bodhisattva* ideals. In course of benefitting others they have to play role of teacher, preacher, priest, astrologer, medical healers, and many more. The attempt to place the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* as they are today within the *varṇa* system is forced. The assumption that *Vajrācāryas* are the *Buddhist Brāhmins* and *Śākyas* the *Kṣetriyas* is just an analogy and does not really work. Even at the time of Sthitimalla who enforced caste system, they were not included in the list of thirty six castes. This is because of their monastic identity, they were outside the caste hierarchy although in fact, in their life as householders, they are inevitably and frequently concerned with their caste status. *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* are then, householder *Buddhist* monks. But some argue that anything which householders do is not really *Buddhists*. At the same time it is important to realize how strongly the monastic ideal exists also as a part of *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* which stress the equal validity or superiority of being a *Buddhist* householder. From *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* viewpoint being a householder is no less than being a monk and nun. So, it was a harder path; not only difficult ritual obligation but also lifelong family responsibilities to be fulfilled in addition. The monastic identity of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* is determined from the following points.

- (i) *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* are members of a recognized *Buddhist saṅgha*-monastic community based on a monastery. In the history of *Buddhism* they have always been used to refer to the community of *Buddhist* monks.
- (ii) They become one of the five or ten *sthavirs* of the monastery on seniority basis.
- (iii) Their monastic initiation and the process of undergoing initiation in presence of five seniormost elders prove they are the monastics.
- (iv) The identity of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* as monks is reaffirmed annually at the festival of *Pañcadān* in which they go from house to house, locality to locality begging alms. It is the testimony that *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* being monks act as the recipients of alms. It is prerogative of only *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* to receive alms from the public laymen during *Pañcadān*



and *Samyak* festivals which are known as the cult of *Dīpaṅkara*. The cult based on *Kapisāvadāna*, a *Buddhist* story has the key role of one of the past *Buddha* known by name as *Dīpaṅkara*. The *Buddhist* laity on such occasions and in other festival and social events offer alm gifts to the *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* and receive blessing from them.

- (v) It is also reaffirmed whenever a *Vajrācārya* or *Śākya* performs an observance or life cycle rituals and has his head shaved. They and only they have the whole head shaved leaving no topknot (*āṇsā*). It is symbolic of their monastic status, which sets them off sharply against all others. In the past *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* kept their heads permanently shaved.<sup>815</sup> But, these days, they keep fully tonsured head while attending religious affairs.
- (vi) The main *Buddhist* monasteries are resided by only *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*. Only they are the custodians of main shrines of the monasteries.
- (vii) *Buddhist* monastic symbols serve to differentiate *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* from other *Newārs*. Since they worship a *caitya*, and other *Buddhist* deities no blood sacrifice is ever made.<sup>816</sup>
- (viii) They are called *Bare*, a derivative of the *Sanskrit* term *Vande* or *Vandanā*, a term of respect used from ancient times for the monk.<sup>817</sup>
- (ix) *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* are addressed with honorific auxiliary '*bijyāye*' which is used only for kings, monks and revered ascetics. Superiority of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* to castes, was evidently built into traditional *Newār* culture.
- (x) Though *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* do not always wear apparently distinguishable *cīvara* (monk robe), they wear a red coloured band crossed between shoulder and waist when they sit in religious

<sup>815</sup> Oldfield, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 38), P.139

<sup>816</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 240-241

<sup>817</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P.3

observances. The band is called *Kasāy gā*, the vestige of the *cīvara*. Also, still while beating *Dharmagandī* bell in the evening and doing evening ritual at the monastery, the serving attendant has to bare his right hand giving the gesture as if he was wearing *cīvara*. Such displays which seem meaningless at seeing, have hidden meaning that these are the monastic signs survived in remnant forms. Similarly, the monastics wear special dress attire (like *bhikṣu lān*, *Āju/Thākuli lān* and cap, *Mū-thāyepā lān*, *pañca-buddha Mukhah* i.e. crown) in occasions according to their hierarchy.

- (xi) *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* do perform more rituals as an expression of their *Buddhist* identity. The amount of time, energy and money expended by *Newār Buddhists* on religion and rituals are laudable and remarkable.<sup>818</sup> They have found ways of combining everyday life and religion. In the past *Buddhist* artisans used to chant *Buddhist* hymns while they worked. The life of an artisan or shopkeeper is indeed such as to permit a considerable amount of religious activity even when they work. Thus, they also stick to their religious practice while they work.<sup>819</sup>
- (xii) *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* were clearly mentioned as *Bhikṣus* in Medieval inscriptions and colophons.<sup>820</sup>

### 11.12 Married clergy

Both groups-*Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* making up *Bare* community hold the clergy of the *Newār Buddhists* and are the custodians of the ancient *Buddhist* shrines, *Bāhā* and *Bahi*. It is only after their initiation at the monastery that one is entitled to be member of *Sanḡha* and has share in the life and rites of the monastery where he was initiated. Among them, *Vajrācāryas* act as the family priests of all other *Buddhist* laity. They have a monopoly on performing life-cycle rites for families: only they may perform the fire sacrifice, and in practice only they may have direct complex, occasional rituals (e.g. *vrata*), since only they are sufficiently

<sup>818</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), P. 33

<sup>819</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>820</sup> For details, please see following paragraphs in the heading *Śākya*, *Śākyaabhikṣu* and *Vajrācārya* separately

knowledgeable. However, purely *Buddhist* divinities-the main *Śākyamuni* images of monasteries, *Tārā* shrines, and *Avlokiteśwara* cults such as the famous *Matschedranāths*-must have *Śākyas* and/or *Vajrācāryas* as their god-guardians. *Baudhācārya cailaka Śākyas* are also given *ācāryābhiṣeka* empowering them to act as priests within his families and activity area.<sup>821</sup> Though *Śākya* can not openly perform priestly functions, they can execute priestly functions in their monasteries or in some stipulated monasteries. This kind of *Buddhist* priesthood is justified in terms of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*' common status as monks, as sons of the *Buddha*. Only they go through the Monastic initiation rite and while performing the rites for the god, the guardian must keep strict monastic rules like celibacy, food restrictions, and purity taboos. The monastic god-guardian role of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* is directly descended from the elaborate *Buddha*-worship conducted in such monasteries in the past. In Lalitpur and Kathmandu the majority of *Newārs* have *Vajrācārya* and not *Brāhman* domestic priests. In Lalitpur priestly roles in most festivals and religious practices are fulfilled by *vajrācāryas* and thus one can say that Lalitpur is predominantly *Buddhist*. As far as their monastic identity is concerned there is no difference between *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya*. They interdine freely and frequently intermarry. They are the caretaker of monastic dieties including the *kwāpādyo* of the monastery, responsible for performing the daily rituals and for the security of the images and ornaments in the shrine.

Monks when requested perform liturgical rituals on behalf of laymen, although this is not his essential function, which, so far as laymen are concerned, is to serve as a 'field of merit' i.e. as a means by which (through offerings they make to him) they can acquire merit.<sup>822</sup> However, these are secondary functions, the main function of *Buddhist* monasticism is to promote the monk's spiritual welfare. *Theravāda* views such functions not important, The *Buddha*'s teaching was limited to what are conducive to enlightenment. *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* on the other hand also consider all these futile under their philosophy of *sūnyata*. Such worldly functions are thought valid in lower level only. The higher practitioners do not entangle in such affairs. Therefore, *Vajrācāryas* are often charged that they perform rituals for others only they do not stick to rituals themselves for their higher practice in which they fully devote to meditational activities like *punaścaraṇ*, *yoga*, *sādhana* etc. That is why the high classed *Vajrācāryas* engaged in meditational activities are

<sup>821</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 22

<sup>822</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 513), P. 106

also called *Sādhakācārya*.<sup>823</sup> But due to their *Bodhisattva* ideals of benefitting others, they seem engaged in rituals providing field of merits to others and serving others in various ways in ameliorating their sufferings, turning over their merit to suffering beings, even to those who appeal to them for worldly goods. *Newār Buddhists* deeply felt that the *Buddha* himself had been a *bodhisattva* dedicated to attaining enlightenment for the sake of all beings in many lives before his final rebirth, and in all of them he had lived as a layman not as a monk. Furthermore, practitioners in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, follow *Vajrayāna* which is not an alternative to the Great way, but a specialized, privileged, and esoteric set of ritual and yogic practices within it. By making use of these practices, the practitioner is supposed to realize emptiness, which is inseparable from compassion in *Buddhist* doctrine.

The total conversion of *bare* into clergy allowed in the social reorganization, but not in the actual working, of the government of the country, was under Jayasthitimalla's rule while royal attenders in clerical affairs were all from the *Hindus*.<sup>824</sup> This shows the clear picture that rulers always followed *brāhmanism* but the people favoured *Buddhism*.

#### 11.12.1 Liturgical or sacerdotal Rituals

Since *Newārs* view their religion primarily as a set of practices, it is their rituals and custom that hold the central stage. *Newār* religion lived in many different contexts. *Vajrayāna* adopted by *Newār Buddhists* is described as a special path within *Buddhism* having both exoteric and esoteric nature. It is essentially a set of techniques involving meditation and elaborate rituals using forbidden substances based upon *tantra* literature and *Vajrayāna* philosophy. *Tārātaiti tantra* – knowledge which saves from the cycle of rebirth is called *Tantra*.<sup>825</sup> The system has visualized various gods/goddesses belonging to *kriyā*, *caryā* and *yoga tantra*. Sharkey gives forth the view that the sentiments and practice of these exoteric *Newār* rituals done in the monasteries are quite similar to those found in traditional shrines in Sri Lanka, where the Sinhalese follow *Theravāda Buddhism*,

---

<sup>823</sup> Pundit Saddharma Raj Bajracharya Shastri(Tr). *Ācārya Kriyāsamuccaya*, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 2062), unpublished, P.1

<sup>824</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 193

<sup>825</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 253

the only surviving part of the *Śrāvakyāna*.<sup>826</sup> The rhythm of the annual and life cycles rites of *Newār Buddhists* is also responsible for keeping these contexts apart and also in place.<sup>827</sup>

Rituals are performed by *Vajrācāryas* that is a status group in the beginning. As far as ordinary usage is concerned, *Vajrayāna* in Nepal means what *Vajrācāryas* do. There is some justification for this usage: without the *Vajrācāryas*, *Vajrayāna* could certainly not survive in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Only they may perform its crucial rites. Traditionally many of those who are entitled to *tantric* Initiation are *Vajrācāryas*, *Śākyas*, *Śreṣṭha*, and *Tulādhār* who were very knowledgeable, capable of singing *tantric* songs and performing *Tantric* rituals; they were often invited along to make up the numbers. But they could not replace the *Vajrācāryas* as the principal priests, a privilege *Vajrācāryas* have jealously and successfully guarded. Nowadays, there are few who cover it; even to *Vajrācāryas* it has come to seem more like a burden. *Tantricism* instead of being tribal, non Āryan or popular, is essentially urban, learned, complicated, and esoteric movement. It is based on learned soteriology.<sup>828</sup> And, *Vajrācāryas* are those who maintained *tantricism* in their monastic practices.

It is known that rites and rituals performed by *Vajrācāryas* in Nepal were developed in India in the great monasteries such as Nālandā and Vikramśīla from eighth century onwards.<sup>829</sup> Furthermore, the *Tibetan* and certain *Japanese Buddhist* sects, notably the *Shingon* sect, still perform the same rites and rituals. In that case, the allegation that rituals of *Vajrācāryas* are the copies of *Hindu* rituals becomes invalid.

*Yogis* and great *Siddhās* adopted *tantric* practice and adapted them to aid the *Buddhist* adept in the performance of the *Sāadhanā* which would bring him to the realization of the great truths of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* and enlightenment. The masters, however, never adopted rituals for their own sake. It had a clear purpose and whenever they took up was integrated into the *Mahāyāna Buddhist* tradition. This view is well said as according to earlier *Buddhism*, rituals are regarded as

---

<sup>826</sup> Sharkey, *Op.cit.* (f.n 15), P. xii

<sup>827</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 4

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>829</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 68, 70 & 74

futile and later *Buddhism* used rituals just as means or tools to enhance practice towards enlightenment. This must be the reason the masters never adopted rituals for their own sake.<sup>830</sup>

Rituals mostly seen as worship is perhaps the religious act par excellence and pervades *Newār Society*. Ritual is often just a complex form of worship, so complex that it requires a class of specialists to perform it.<sup>831</sup> If worship is the most basic religious act, ritual may be defined as the combination of acts of worship of different sorts to form a whole. There are different types of rituals encountered in *Newār Buddhism* as a preliminary approach.

*Guru maṇḍala*, *Kalaśapūjā* (flask worship) and *Homa* (Fire sacrifice) as three basic rituals of *Newār Buddhism* which contained the moral understandings of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* but have been placed firmly within a ritualistic *vajrayānist* framework. These rituals seem *Hindu* because they are meant to seem *Hindu*. The content of rituals is thoroughly *Buddhist*.

#### 11.12.1.1 Philosophy behind Rituals

*Buddhist* rituals are derived out of *Buddhist* texts, stemming from the compassionate occupation, expressing devotion to the *Tri-ratna* and asserting their interrelationship; on the authority of the *Buddha*, the *Saṅgha* acts to utilize the *Dharma* to create mundane and supramundane blessing; domesticated or adapted *Buddhism* across Asia developed many avenues whereby monastic leaders adapted their lineage's resources as a 'Triple Jewels' to remain a compelling refuge.<sup>832</sup> Religious focus of *Newār Saṅgha* is towards perfecting ritual expressions of the doctrine within society preserving the *Dharma*.

Philosophically rites and rituals are important in religion and in the eyes of *Buddhists* of all sects, rites with proper mental accompaniment are necessary; deprived of its supernatural contents. Otherwise, *Buddhism* would be no more than a system of ethics and philosophy. So, properly understood ritual has a role in all forms of *Buddhism*. Even the *Theravādins* and *Zen* followers, who are the most

---

<sup>830</sup> *Ibid*, P. 71

<sup>831</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 108

<sup>832</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 8-9

austere *Buddhists* perform quite elaborate rite morning and evening.<sup>833</sup> Spiritual power has to be recognized and worshipped- though certainly not as a creator god and what is worshipped in the *Buddha* is the principle of Enlightenment; man as his own savior depends on self power, that is to say his power of mind. *Buddhist* masters developed a special class of *tantra*, the *kriyā tantra* to benefit people inclined to ritual as a means of overcoming their ignorance and the karmic effects of their sins. Though ritual played a subordinate role, it was a tool or psychological instrument the adept used to help himself to the realization and enlightenment he was seeking. *Tantric* rites and rituals involving *maṇḍala*, *mudrās*, *mantras* and *dhāraṇīs* seem bewildering and magical are not meant to be studied or read, but to be practiced, realized and lived. *Newār Buddhism* being ritualistic has various uses of *Mantra* and *Dhāraṇīs*. It is mentioned in *Manjuśrī mūlkalpa* that *Bodhisattva* theory has connection with taking refuge in *mantra* practice, making striking assertion that *Bodhisattvas* even become chants or their agents.<sup>834</sup>

Therefore, one must rely on the testimony of experienced practitioners, and it should not merely be criticized on the basis of having studied the *tantras* as the philosophical texts. Their testimony is that it does work. Accomplished adepts attain to states of consciousness and acquire curious psychic powers not easily attainable by other means. There are, of course, levels of understanding. Not everyone who performs or attends these *Buddhist* rituals is interested in or capable of understanding the subtle teachings, or of experiencing the realization they are capable of leading to. The ritual worship performed by the *Vajrācārya* and by their laity is all part of the common heritage of *Vajrayāna -Tantric Buddhism* developed and practiced in the great monastic universities of India from the eighth century until the disappearance of *Buddhism* in India. Some of the major rites and rituals of *Newār* monastics are as follows.

- (i) ***Pañcopacāra* worship rite-** Various types of ritual offerings are made to deities when a *Buddhist* visits a temple or performs worship at his home, with the help of the *Vajrācārya*. As the name indicates (*Pañca* meaning five) the popular offerings include substances corresponding to five sense faculties. They are *Gandha* (Vermillion), *Puṣpa* (flower), *Dhupa* (incense), *Dīpa* (light), *Rasa* (*naivadya*, fruits), *Jajankā* (sacred thread)

<sup>833</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n 108), P. 71

<sup>834</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 8-9

etc. These offering are made with the recitation of the ritual *verses*. The offering may also be made mentally without any materials. This is called mental worship. *Pañcopacāra pūjā* (the five-fold offering) is the most popular exoteric worship.

- (ii) ***Guru-maṇḍalā***- *Guru-maṇḍalā* is the important ritual in *Newār Buddhism*. This rite is the first ritual performed by a *Vajrācārya* at the beginning of every *pūjā* for purification of oneself, his *jajamān* (parishioner) and the surrounding area. *Guru-maṇḍalā* serves two purposes. On one hand, this performance is equivalent in meaning to that of *Theravādins* taking *pañca śīla* (promises of morality), and also to that of *Hindus* giving the gift of cow before undertaking any good work.<sup>835</sup> The *Bodhisattva* vows (Moral undertakings of *Mahāyāna*) is built into the structure of the *Guru maṇḍala* rite which is ritualistic framework of *Vajrayāna*, but most lay people do not know this.<sup>836</sup> So, a *Vajrayānist* can not undertake a spiritual work without performing the *Gurumaṇḍala*. On the other hand, *Guru-maṇḍalā* is also the veneration and offering made to the *Guru*, the Teacher, (the triple gems-*Guru Buddha*, *Guru Dharma* and *Guru Saṅgha*) who is represented by *Vajrasattva*. The deity being worshipped is also considered to be the *Vajrācārya*'s *Guru*. The *maṇḍala* in question is the Mt. Meru *maṇḍala* which is offered ritualistically to the *Guru*. The most remarkable point in *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual performance is repeated offering of parched rice and unbroken rice to the accompaniment of the popular *Buddhist* motto '*Ye Dharmā hetuprabhāva...*'. All *Buddhist* sects, *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhists* alike have at least accepted this formula as a summation of the *Buddha*'s teachings and have used it as a motto or slogan. Custom of performing *Guru-maṇḍalā* in Nepal also justifies the saying that instead of concept of *Tri-ratna* (triple gems); *Catu-ratna* (Quadri gems) concept prevailed in *Nepalese Buddhism*, as pointed out by Rajendra Ram.<sup>837</sup> Therefore, *Guru-maṇḍala* encompasses several rites starting from remembrance of *Guru* to *Triśaraṇ gamaṇ*, *pāpadeśāna*, *Punyānumodana*, *Bodhicitta parināmana* etc.

<sup>835</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 83

<sup>836</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P.150

<sup>837</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 54



- (iii) ***Kalaśa rite***- After *Gurumaṇḍala*, *Kalaśa Pūjā* is another basic ritual of *Newār* monastics, which is followed after *Guru-maṇḍalā* ritual. *Kalaśa* is a small flask or water pot which is used by the *Vajrācāryas* to summon the deity into it for worshipping. This is an ancient Indian ritual which is adopted by the *Buddhists* and is still in vogue. The ritual is followed by an evocation of the personification of the water (*vajramṛitodaka*-the diamond nectar water). By means of this *sādhana* the priest is supposed to evoke the deity and then come to a realization of its ultimate identity with the divine principle, the voidness (*sūnyata*). The deity summoned into the *Kalaśa* depends on the purpose of the ritual and the place it is being performed. Though the ordinary officiant at a *Kalaśa pūjā* is the *Vajrācārya*, a *Śākya* may also perform it as a part of his private worship. This *pūjā* is carried out to show one's devotion, to satisfy, please and propitiate the deity, and to present one's petition. According to old text *Kriyā Saṁgraha* the main aim of the *Kalaśapūjā* is to make the deity present in the *Kalaśa* by means of a *sādhana* and then through the consecration (*abhiṣeka*) of the *Kalaśa* to bring about a participation in *Nirvāṇa* itself. The worship and *samādhi* of the *nāgas* especially of *Vāsukināgarāja*, who is considered to be the ruling *nāga* of the valley at the present time, are done during most of the elaborated *pūjā* including *Kalaśapūjā* when *yajna* is also performed as the part of the *pūjā*. This action can be corroborated to the belief that the valley of Kathmandu was once the special abode of the *nāgas*. In *Kalaśapūjā*, *nāgpan*, an earthen vessel with an image of a snake is used for worship of *nāgas*.
- (iv) If next step of rituals is to be followed, that will be *Saptavidhānuttara pūjā* which requires materials as needed for *Pañcopacāra pūjā* i.e. flowers, incense, wick light, *Gandha*, *Rasa*, but their quantities vary as per affordability of the worshipper, ranging from 108, 360, 1000 and more. *Saptavidhānuttara pūjā* is also observed in the name of *Tārā Dharma* or *pūjā* offered to *Avlokiteśvara*.<sup>838</sup>

<sup>838</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 602), P. 46

- (v) ***Sāadhanā rite-*** *Sāadhanā* is often mixed with principal rituals in *Vajrayāna*. The importance of *Newār Buddhist* rituals is ritualization of *Vajrayānic sāadhanā*. The *sāadhanā* lies at the very heart of all *Vajrayāna* worship and its philosophy. *Sāadhanā* can be defined as a visualization and evocation of a deity, which leads the worshipper straight to the goal of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* that is the realization of the emptiness (*sūnyatā*) and the identification of the worshipper with it. In other words, the ultimate aim of the *sāadhanā* is to transcend duality by attaining a vivid conscious experience of the non dual state. Though *sāadhanā* is also termed as meditation, it is actually a meditation which involves the visualization of the deity while other forms of meditation should not be regarded as *sāadhanā*.<sup>839</sup>

The *Bhikṣus* can indeed perform some of the lower offices of religion; but the *Vajrācārya* solely are competent to the discharge of the higher; and, in point of fact, are the only real clergy, that the distinction of clerus et laicus (clergies from laymen) in this creed is altogether an anomaly, resulting from the decay of the primitive asceticism of the sect.<sup>840</sup>

Monastic institutions which maintained *Buddhism* in any locality survived through interlocking economic, ritual, educational, medical, artistic, political, and meditation activities. Service to the local community was essential to institutional survival prior to any philosophical or scholarly pursuits. From this view *Newār Buddhism* stands as practical *Buddhist* tradition. As mentioned above *Buddhism* is reduced to mere a set of ethics or Philosophy if rituals are removed. *Buddhism* is indeed not only philosophy and/or religion but also a way of living and being. As texts were also put to use in the service of various ritual function, the ritual part of *Buddhism* should not be neglected. Ritual performance as *upāyas* (skillful or expedient means) are included in *Vajrayāna* contexts assisting the community aiming at fostering prosperity, health and wealth. Throughout the social order, normative *Buddhism* exists. The idealizing paradigm of *Buddhism* dominated by aloof, meditating ascetics and controlled by intellectuals is unsuitable for portraying the typical *Buddhist* monk or nun; and it certainly can not stand scrutiny as model for the history of *Buddhism's* doctrinal or institutional evolution.

<sup>839</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 107 & 115

<sup>840</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 99

Following the view of Schopen, it can be said that the actual monk, unlike the textual monk, appears to have been deeply involved in religious giving and cult practice of every kind from the beginning.<sup>841</sup> And, *Buddhist* rituals were developed and sustained by those wishing to shape human experience consciously when literacy was rare. It was ritual practice that created and defined *Buddhist* identity and it was faith in the pragmatic powers of the *Buddhas* and *Bodhisattvas* accessed through ritual that held the centre of *Buddhist* tradition. So, along with scholarship development, the neglected sources: ritual texts along with narrative stories also deserve attention. But, rituals is one long neglected area of historical investigation while these rituals are equally important as they are based on *Buddhist* doctrines. In the modern age rituals are supposed to be baseless and useless. Individuals starting from infancy are socialized into their religious identity by their participation in rituals. According to the saying of Southwold ritual and belief ultimately impact humans through separate sensory-neural pathways.<sup>842</sup>

#### 11.12.1.2 Esoteric rituals

Before using gods and magical practices as means of whole scheme of release, practitioners should believe in those gods and magical practices for their own sake.<sup>843</sup> This reference is true as *tantric* cult seems revolving around the worship of the gods along with magical practices. For the *tantric* cult practice every monastery possesses its own *Tantric* shrine called *āgaṃ* which means god's room where esoteric rituals are carried out by those members of the family having *tantric* initiation. The degree of secrecy surrounding them varies. The basis of the cult of *Tantric* deities who are believed to be notorious and ferocious is the use of songs, dance, alcohol and meat to worship them in their *maṇḍalas*. One of the most popular ways of this worship is the *kolāśya pūjā* (Sow face worship) i.e. worship of *Vajrabārāhī*, the adamantine sow, also known in *Newārī* as *Sinhah pūjā* or the Long Vermilion worship. The *Kumārī* who is physically made present during this *pūjā* is the *Vajrācārya kumārī*, different from the royal *kumārī* who is from *Śākya* clan. There are two kinds of *āgaṃpūjā* or *guhya pūjā* (worship)- the ordinary (*sādhāraṇa*) in which it is not necessary to sing *cacā*, *Tantric* songs; and the

<sup>841</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), P. 170

<sup>842</sup> Southwold, Martin, *Buddhism in Life: The Anthropological Study of Religion and the Sinhalese Practice of Buddhism*, Manchester, (England: Manchester University Press, 1983), P. 199

<sup>843</sup> Quotation from Snellgrove' Hevajra Tantra, Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 294

special (*viśeṣa guhya*), also called *rahaṣya* (secret) *pūjā* which requires *Tantric* songs. Of the special rites Gellner enlists thirteen kinds including *Kuś pūjā*, *sinhaḥ pūjā*, *māmsāhuti*, *chatrisamvata*, *ahorātra pūjā* etc. *Yogic* visualization (*sāadhanā*) is the characteristic of *vajrayānic* esoteric rites. Without the motor of visualization the whole religion of *Newārs* would grind to a halt. He mentions that the *Sanskrit* verses which give the prescribed form of these visualization are known to all practicing *Vajrācārya* priests, but few could analyze them with any accuracy.

The hierarchy of three levels of *Newār Buddhism*, the Disciple's way, the Great way, and the Diamond way which are symbolically and practically represented in the architectural organization of the *Newār* monastery is seen in their rituals too. In addition to popular three *kāyas* (bodies)<sup>844</sup> of the *Buddha*, *Tantric Buddhism* added a fourth called variously the Innate body (*Sahajakāya*), the body of great bliss (*Mahāsukhakāya*) or the Self existent body (*Svabhāvikakāya*). This reflected the idea that the secret *Tantric* deities are the real inner essence of all three previous forms. Regular rites are viewed as training the mind, as expressive rather than as immediately effective; exoteric worship is a preliminary to esoteric worship; and all worship is conceived as a soteriological exercise. The concept of emancipation is not entirely absent in *Newār* monasticism as the esoteric forms of higher tantric practice are soteriological in nature. The exoteric forms of *Newār* monasticism do not reveal soteriological aspects except the mundane ones.

### 11.13 *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Vajrācārya*- a status

Both *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* along with other monastics like *Buddhācārya*, *Cailak Bhikṣus* are described as the castes under *Bare*. A *Bare* is one who has undergone the *Bare chuyegu* initiation (ordination) rite and consequently has become a member of a recognized *Buddhist Saṅgha*. Previous writers who have been mostly anthropologists have examined the *Bare* from the viewpoint of the caste structure of *Newār* society, treating it parallel to nearly the *Brāhmans*. From the viewpoint of caste this is quite valid. Argument has been raised whether *Bare chuyegu* can be called monastic initiation or not in the context of Nepal. There is argument that *Bare chuyegu* has become caste initiation not monastic initiation. However, it is

---

<sup>844</sup> Three *kāyas* of the *Buddha* are *Dharmakāya* (doctrinal body), *Nirmānakāya* (Emanation or form body), and *Sambhogkāya* (bliss body).

indeed monastic in every case as it is done in monastery (*vihāra*).<sup>845</sup> Here the saying of Southwold also supports the statement that controversially for the Srilankan context, *priest is a better translation of Bhikṣu than a monk*.<sup>846</sup> Śrāvakyāna rites and Mahāyāna rites both are incorporated in *Newār Buddhism*. Among the two groups of *Bare*, the *Vajrācārya* and the *Śākya*, the former is considered higher by virtue of their priestly functions. Although *Śākyaś* are identified as goldsmith and *Vajrācārya* as family priest, their traditional occupation has nothing to do with caste. The distinction between *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* is not caste. The position of all of the *Bare* as a caste is an anomaly if it is seen from the viewpoint of *Buddhism*. In fact, the *pravajyā* rite which they still undergo includes the complete shaving of the head as a sign of the rejection of all caste status and entrance into the *Saṅgha*, or monastic community of which they are the direct successors indicate these were not castes. From this view, it is an anomaly that they are given a special caste status which is so recognized by others. It is also an anomaly that they have formed a closed matrilineal descent group, for in all *Buddhist* countries, and in India during the heyday of *Buddhism*, the monastic community was always open to members of all castes. There is a local saying of many that this caste status is something “imposed” on them by the *Malla* kings, especially Jayasthitimalla, who organized all *Newār* society along the lines of *Hindu* castes. Still the educated *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* freely admit that there is no justification for such a status or such a closed *Saṅgha* in the *Buddhist* scriptures and that their *Saṅghas* should be open to all who want to take the initiation of a *Śākya* or *Vajrācārya* irrespective of the castes.<sup>847</sup> In fact, as recorded in the history, monastic *Saṅghas* were open to all.

It has been already mentioned above that those practitioners who follow *Mahāyāna* path being *Bhikṣu* became *Śākyabhikṣu*. Anybody desirous to do so could become *Śākyabhikṣu*. Once, one becomes *Śākyabhikṣu*, the door is open for him to be *Vajrācārya* after acquiring further qualification, and further initiation like *Ācāryābhiṣeka* which confers him as *Vajrācārya*. There are several historical records of conversion to *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Vajrācārya* from other castes like *Kāyastha*, *Brāhmins*, and others. Several references have already been mentioned above. It is also believed that some 1000 years before, Sunayaśrī and his two

<sup>845</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 142

<sup>846</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>847</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 12

brothers hailed from Kapilvastu took ordination under *Buddhism* and resided at *Sunayaśrī Misra Saṁskārīta Yampi Mahāvihāra*. Not so far in the history, just about 5 generation before (about 100 years), a *Brāhman* named Dhananjaya Upadhyaya converted to *Śākyabhikṣu* performing *Swānchā* worship after having undergone *Pravrajyā* thus obtaining lineage and membership of the *Saṅgha* at *Kirtīpunya Mahāvihār (Lagan Bāhā)*. Later, he transformed to *Vajrācārya* after receiving *Ācāryābhiṣeka*.<sup>848</sup> *Om Bāhā* or Kathmandu and *Bu Bāhā Saṅgha* of Lalitpur are believed to consist of *Saṅgha* members from *Brāhman* descendants. Still there is a practice of offering initiation to *Pradhāns (Subhāju)* in *Than Bahi*<sup>849</sup> and *Jyāpu (Mahārjan)* castes *Thāyamadu Bāhā (Sthanmandap Vihāra)*.<sup>850</sup> Still higher initiations which are made accessible to *Vajrācārya* after receiving *Ācāryābhiṣeka* are given to other castes like *Śākyas, Tulādhār, Chitrakārs* etc. Till early medieval period, *Vajrācārya* was used as the title. Those who receive *ācāryābhiṣeka* being qualified to do so, are called *Vajrācārya*. Later, *Vajrācārya* was converted to caste and the process of *ācāryābhiṣeka* is retained as a mandatory rite de passage for *Vajrācārya* boys. Then sons of a *Vajrācārya* couple, after *ācāryābhiṣeka* were made *Vajrācārya*. The conversion into the caste is said to have been imposed by the king Jayasthitimalla while organizing casteism in Nepal. Some scholars assigned it to the approximate period of Yakṣamalla. Before this *Vajrācārya* remained as the prestigious status conferred to the *Vajrayāna* practitioner in lieu of his proven qualification.

The honorary status of *Vajrācārya* is also revealed through its equivalent local term ‘*Gubhāju*’ which was derived from ‘*Guru bhāju*’ meaning honourable teacher. The word ‘*bhāju*’ is believed to have originated from ‘*Bharando*’ which later became ‘*Bhāro*’. There are some *Lichchavī* inscriptions mentioning the term ‘*Bhāro*’. Luciano Petech mentions about *Buddhist* persons with *bhāro* in their name like the Kris-son *Bhāro*<sup>851</sup> who paid visit to and invited Atīśā to his home

<sup>848</sup> Milan Shakya, ‘Kirtīpunya Mahāvihārako SaṅghaParamparā (Sangha Tradition of Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra)’ in *Viswoshanti*, Issue 9, Year 9, (Lalitpur: Viswośānti Pustakalaya, Buddha Samvat 2543), Pp. 83-84. Descendants of the *Brāhman* progenitor are still surviving e.g. Saptamuni, his father Triratnamuni etc.

<sup>849</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 11), Pp. 405-410

<sup>850</sup> Ratnakaji Bajracharya, and Vijayaratna Bajracharya, *Nepā:deyā Vihārayā Tā:chā- Key to Vihāras in Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Ratnakaji, Vijayaratna Bajracharya, 1983), P. 36

<sup>851</sup> Petech, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 289), P. 42

while the later was residing at *Svayambhū*, and *Vajrapāla Bhāro*.<sup>852</sup> Petech gives *bhāro* a meaning for nobleman while describing the events of 13<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>853</sup> The word *bhāro* was made more honorific adding the suffix ‘*ju*’ as such is usually done in Nepal. So, the term *Guru Bhāroju* was formed. Later, it changed with time into *Gubhāju*, *Guruju*, *Gurju*, the terms still in use for *Vajrācārya* in Kathmandu valley.

Therefore, philosophically the *Bare* should be kept outside of the caste system. It is indeed a socio-religious status. Perhaps this must have been the reason of not including *Bare* under *varṇa* system by Jayasthitimalla when he promulgated religious policy in 13<sup>th</sup> century after controlling then political situation of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The caste structure of *Newār* society in fact places the *Bare* and especially the *Vajrācārya*, in a contradictory position. On one hand they are the custodians of a religious tradition which gives them a place of honour, partly because they have renounced caste, while on the other hand they are members of a society which gives them a high caste status and certain social rewards based on their religious position. Here suggestion made by Father John K Locke is noteworthy- in order to understand the position of *Bare* in *Newār Buddhist* society it would perhaps be better to start not from the considerations of caste, but from their religious status.<sup>854</sup>

#### 11.14 *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas*- the working *Buddhist* practitioners

During Buddha’s time and afterward, there was a class of monks known as *navakarmikā*. *Navakarmikā* monk is that individual who is directly responsible for all matters connected with construction activities on behalf of the monastic community or responsibilities of those referred to.<sup>855</sup> *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* can be those *Navakarmikā* monks because they are still stuck to construction activities, may it be art construction, *Vihāra* construction or ornaments construction.<sup>856</sup> The word *Karmāntika*, known from both literature and inscriptions, could conceivably be related to *Navakarmikā*. It could be possible that those persons known to be goldsmith (from the words like *Hemakarovāsan*, *Suvarṇakāra*) in Medieval Nepal

---

<sup>852</sup> *Ibid*, P. 53

<sup>853</sup> *Ibid*, P. 88

<sup>854</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 13

<sup>855</sup> Silk, *Op.cit.* (f.n 472), P. 82

<sup>856</sup> *Ibid*,

from contemporary colophons like from scripture of *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpārāmitā* (N.S. 173)<sup>857</sup> etc. who sponsored or wrote *Buddhist* scriptures must have been *Vajrācārya* or *Śākya*. Even today, these communities are found in those profession. In one case perhaps from second century, the individual in question (*karmāntikā*) is a minister (*amāchā*), apparently responsible for the gift of an image, tank or monastery by a princess. This *karmāntikā* is clearly not a celibate monk but the householder monk. In another case, however from perhaps the fourth-century in Devnie Morie casket, the two persons mentioned as *karmāntika* were explicitly called *Śākyabhikṣu*, which probably indicates them not as celibate monks but as *Mahāyānists*.<sup>858</sup> This also further supports the view that *Śākyabhikṣus* are working *Buddhist* practitioners/monks from the beginning.

From above sources, it becomes clear that House holder married monks like *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* existed much before 5<sup>th</sup> century. In Nepal Jayasthitimalla of 13<sup>th</sup> century is blamed for converting then celibate monks into married holder's lives because of his forceful oppressive *Hindu* policy. Conversion of *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Vajrācārya* from celibate monks to married householder monks will be dealt separately in another chapter section.

### 11.15 Householder monks in *Buddhism*

Since, the monastics of *Newār* monasticism are married householder practitioners, a short discussion on provision for householder practitioners in *Buddhism* will be helpful in understanding their status. In the *Buddhist* lifestyle from a monastic point of view there are many aspects of monastic life and training that can be utilized - albeit in an adapted form - in lay practice. From the *Buddhist* scriptures it becomes apparent that while there were teachings given to lay people, the majority of teaching given by the *Buddha* was to monks and nuns. This leads to a commonly asked question: 'Does one have to be ordained or can lay people get enlightened?' There are references in the scriptures to lay people getting enlightened during the time of the *Buddha* and, having been both a lay person and a monk. *Buddha* himself was a married householder practising *Bodhisattva* in numerous previous lives and in his final rebirth before attaining enlightenment. That means to say the *Buddha* attained enlightenment not being a monk but being a layman. As a

<sup>857</sup> Joshi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 279), P. 43

<sup>858</sup> Silk, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 472), P. 97



*bodhisattva* in previous life, he lived a life of layman.<sup>859</sup> The king Suddhodana, the father of *Śākyamuni Buddha*, attained *Nirvāṇa* in house holder condition while he was still a layman.<sup>860</sup>

The *Pāli* texts like *Anguttara Nikāya*<sup>861</sup> explicitly identify 19 householders (*gahapati*) as "foremost" (*agga*) lay disciples of the Buddha, who have "attained perfection" or, "attained to certainty" (*niṭṭhamgata*) and "seen deathlessness with their own eyes" (*amataddaso, amataṃ sacchikata*). These householders are endowed (*samannāgato*) with six things (*chahi dhammehi*):

- (i) unwavering faith (*aveccappasādena*) in the *Buddha*
- (ii) unwavering faith in the Teaching (*dhamma*)
- (iii) unwavering faith in the Community (*Saṅgha*)
- (iv) noble moral discipline (*ariyena sīlena*)
- (v) noble knowledge (*ariyena ñānena*)
- (vi) noble release (*ariyāya vimuttiyā*)

While some interpret this reference to indicate that these householders have attained arahantship, others interpret it to mean they have attained at least "stream entry" (*sotapatti*) but not final release. According to *Milindapañha*, the para-canonical scripture, a householder who has attained arahantship, either goes forth into homelessness on the very day or he attains final *Nirvāṇa*. It is not possible for him to pass without one or other of these events taking place.<sup>862</sup> However, in both the cases, his aim of attaining goal is fulfilled, and subsequent events, therefore, are not so important.

Attaining the state of non-returner (*Anāgāmi*) is portrayed in the early texts as the ideal goal for laity.<sup>863</sup> *Bhikṣu* Amritananda has compiled biographies of 58 noteworthy householders practicing Buddhism in his books entitled '*Buddhakālīn Grihasṭhīharu*' written in three volumes based upon about 165 *sūtras* mentioned in

<sup>859</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 513), P. 108

<sup>860</sup> Santina, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 131), P. 201

<sup>861</sup> *Anguttara Nikāya* 1.14.[1], 6.119 and AN 6.120

<sup>862</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 233), P. 336

<sup>863</sup> Nyanaponika & Hellmuth Hecker, *Great Disciples of the Buddha- Their live, Their works, Their Legacy*, (Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 2003), P. 365

*Pāli* literature. The following are examples of individuals who are explicitly identified as a "householder" (*Pāli*, *gahapati*) in multiple *suttas*.<sup>864</sup>

- (i) *Anāthapindika*<sup>865</sup>, is referenced for instance in as "the householder Sudatta, the foremost lay devotee."<sup>866</sup>
- (ii) *Citta*<sup>867</sup>, referenced for instance in as "the (foremost) householder for explaining the Teaching." *Citta* is one of two male lay disciples identified for emulation by the *Buddha*.<sup>868</sup>
- (iii) *Nakulapitā* and *Nakulamāta*<sup>869</sup>, referenced respectively, as "the best confident" and the foremost "for undivided pleasantness."
- (iv) *Ugra*, a pious layman in the *Ugradatta-pariprccha*, an early discipline *Sūtra* composed before Nāgarjuna period, exhibited higher layman *Buddhist* practice discarding recluse's practice.
- (v) *Vimalakīrti* and Páng Yùn in Zen tradition were prominent householders/laypersons who achieved enlightenment. *Vimalkīrti-nirdesh-sūtra* (Spotless Fame *Sūtra*) which portrays ideal householder practitioners, has been influential in Chinese, Japanese, and other

<sup>864</sup> (i) *Anguttara Nikāya* 1.14.249, and 1.14.250

(ii) F. L. Woodward, *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara Nikāya)*, Vol. I, (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1995), Pp. 22-24

(iii) Amritananda, *Buddhakālīn Grihasthīharu (Householders in Buddha' time)*, Part 1, (Kathmandu: Ānandakuṭī Vidyāpīṭha, B.S. 2029)-mentions about 10 eminent householders known from 114 *sūtras*

(iv) Amritananda, *Buddhakālīn Grihasthīharu (Householders in Buddha' time)*, Part 2 (Kathmandu: Ānandakuṭī Vihar Guthi, 1978)- mentions about 25 noteworthy householders based upon 31 *sūtras*.

(v) Amritananda, *Buddhakālīn Grihasthīharu (Householders in Buddha' time)*, Part 3 (Kathmandu: Ānandakuṭī Vihar Guthi, 1979)-has description of 23 noteworthy householders drawn from 30 *sūtras*. Amritananda himself admits that he has not included those householders who made minor contribution.

<sup>865</sup> *Ibid*, *Anguttara Nikāya* 1.14.249,

<sup>866</sup> Amritananda, Op.cit. (f.n. 864iii), Pp. 25-30

<sup>867</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 137-143

<sup>868</sup> In *Samyutta Nikāya* 17.23, Dunda Bahadur Bajracharya (Tr.), *The Samyukta Nikāya, Third Book of Sutta Pitaka-The kindred Sayings of the Buddha given in Nepal Bhāṣā*, (Lalitpur: Pavitra Bahadur, Ashok Ratna, Hira Devi Bajracharya, Bir-Purna Pustak Sangrahalaya, 1999), P. 405

<sup>869</sup> for instance in *Anguttara Nikāya* 1.14.257 and 1.14.266,

*Buddhist* societies. In the text *Vimalakīrti* gives a sermon to monks, contrary to the ordinary manner, denouncing the homeless life of asceticism.

The goal of *Buddhism* is *nirvāṇa* which involves not only an understanding of the teachings but a supportive lifestyle. These both are embodied in the Triple Refuges and the Five Precepts, which form the basic definition of what it is to 'be' a *Buddhist*. This foundation is essentially the same for everyone as is our shared humanity. The difference for monastics is the level of refinement possible; in the opportunity to study and practice the teachings, but most noticeable around the precepts. From the standpoint of *Mahāyāna* Buddhist philosophy, there is no discrimination between *saṃsāra* (mundane existence) and *nirvāṇa* (deliverance). For ignorant laymen, it is *saṃsāra* and for the enlightened ones the same is *nirvāṇa*. It is like two sides of a coin. If reality is understood, he dwells in *nirvāṇa* otherwise he lives in *saṃsāra*. Siddhartha attained buddhahood by living in the *saṃsāra*. Therefore, there is a view that in practice the essence of religion should be sought for, not in the life of recluses, but in the lay life of householder.

The purpose of 'going forth' (*Pravajyā*) is to turn away from thoughts of sensuality (*kama-chchanda*) and objects of sense (*vatthu-kāma*). It is, therefore, really a self sacrifice, and the urge to do so should be a genuine one if it is to bear pleasant fruit. This is certainly not a course that all can follow; for to leave behind the world's attractive and pleasurable life is no easy task. It may not be possible for all to cut themselves off from the world and all it holds. And the *Buddha* does not expect all his followers to become monks or ascetics. Again the *Dhammapada* has the following verses.

Hard it is to go forth  
From home to homelessness,  
To take delight in it is hard.<sup>870</sup>

In the *Buddha's* Dispensation, full liberty is granted to the disciples to leave the order if they find it difficult to live the monk's life any more. There is no coercion

---

<sup>870</sup> Dhammapada verse No. 302

*Duppabhajjāṃ durābhiramaṃ durāvāsā gharā dukhā,  
Dukkho' samāna saṃvāso dukkhānupatitaddagū*  
Dhammananda, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 84), P. 525

or compulsion whatsoever, and the person reverting to the lay life is not stigmatized.<sup>871</sup>

In most parts of the *Buddhist* world, *Buddhist* monks and nuns live married householder life within the monastic community leaving celibate lives. The wife of king Meghavāhana of Kāśmir built a monastery half of which was destined for married monks as early as the fifth or sixth century.<sup>872</sup>

After the dissemination of *Mahāyāna* traditions to Tibet from Nepal, it is also mentioned that in at least the last four centuries, *Nepalese Buddhism* has shared much in common with the domesticated forms of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in modern Tibet and Japan, notably with a householder *Saṅgha*.<sup>873</sup>

The *Vajrayāna* tradition of *Tibetan* type has produced many prominent practicing householders, from Mārpā to Dromton Gyalwa Jungne, the spiritual son of Atiśā; Padmasambhava, Gompopa, Śākya masters like Khon Konchog Gyelpo, Sachen kunga nyingpo etc. to mention a few. The *ngākpā*, like Śākya and *Vajrācārya* is an ordained *Tantrik* in *Tibetan Buddhist* tradition, sometimes a householder with certain vows (dependent upon *Lāmā* and Lineage) that make them the householder equivalent of an ordained *Bhikṣu*. The path of a Tantric or *Ngākpā* or *Ngākmā* (female) is a rigorous discipline whereby one 'enjoys the sense-fields' as a part of one's practice. A practitioner utilizes the whole of the phenomenal world as one's path. Marrying, raising children, working jobs, leisure, art, play etc. are all means to realize the enlightened state or *Rigpā*, non-dual awareness. A *Ngākpā* or *Ngākmā* does not need to be a householder particularly, but is still encouraged to 'immerse oneself' in the world at large.

In Japanese *Buddhism*, this is no longer the norm to be celibate in the modern period (1868 – present), and most Japanese *Buddhist* monks are actually married men with families.<sup>874</sup> They are sometimes called priests in English, since the word monk implies celibacy in most contexts. The Jodo Shinshu, or True Pure land sect,

<sup>871</sup> Piyadassi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 77), P. 362.

<sup>872</sup> *Garhaṣṭhyagarhyah* is the word which is used for the married monks. M. A. Stein, *Kalhana's Rajatarangini: A Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*, Vol. I, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1961, P.74.; Locke, *Op.cit.*(f.n.11), P. 482

<sup>873</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), P. 13

<sup>874</sup> Baroni, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 138), P. 217.

was the first Japanese sect to allow its clergy to marry beginning with the founder Śīnran (1173 – 1262), who lived during the late 12<sup>th</sup> and early 13<sup>th</sup> century. For many centuries, Jodo Śīnsū priests were the only married *Buddhist* clergy in Japan. During the Meiji period (1868 – 1912), the Japanese Government lifted the legal sanctions against marriage for *Buddhist* monks. Although the monastic code was never actually changed, *Buddhist* monks began marrying, and it is now typical for *Buddhist* temples in Japan to be handed down within biological families, with sons inheriting the position of head monk from their fathers. Modern Japanese *Buddhist* monks marry, have their families and pass down their temples from father to son like family business. It is interesting and important to notice here the focus of Japanese debate, which has nothing whatsoever to do with questions such as the importance of meditation, scholarship, or ritual performance, activities frequently associated with the ideal image of *Buddhist* monk. The Japanese introduced the practice of married clergy to Koreans during the years of occupation (1911 – 1945). The practice resulted in difficulties in Korean *Buddhist* community after the end of second world war, when Korean *Buddhists* began to reassert the traditional monastic code of celibacy.

#### 11.15.1 Householder monks in Nepal

*Buddhism* prevailed in Nepal before it entered China, Korea and Japan. Therefore, system of married monks also must have existed in Nepal before it spread to those countries. However, it is not clear when married monks first appeared in Nepal. It's reference is often made to Śīvadeva period i.e by the end of 6<sup>th</sup> century when he relinquished throne becoming a monk and then returned to householder life. The period also coincides with that of emergence of Śākyabhikṣus (*Mahāyāna monks*) in India and Nepal, who appeared as married monks later. The period was also marked by prevalence of *Vajrayāna* which encouraged householder monk system.<sup>875</sup> As such, we can see the prominence of householders in the *Vajrayāna* tradition. One can, however, be a householder without taking the vows of a *Ngākpā*. In *Vajrayāna* system under practice of skills in means, it is believed that simply holding the five precepts, *Bodhisattva* vows and the *tantric* vows while practising diligently can result in enlightenment. And this must have given rise the concept of Householder monks which is in practice in Kathmandu. But, the earliest

---

<sup>875</sup> Indicated by *Gokarṇa* Inscription of Amśuvarma mentioning *Vajrayāna*. Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), Pp. 370-71

documented evidences of presence of married monks in Nepal appear only from 11<sup>th</sup> century and thereafter.<sup>876</sup>

The *Mahāyāna* produced texts modifying the spirit of *Vinaya*, emphasizing the importance of a compassionate intention even if that might involve breach of mainstream *Vinaya* but there was no significant attempt, indeed no need, to construct and impose a systematic *Mahāyāna Vinaya* rivaling those of the non-*Mahāyānic* schools for main-stream *Bhikṣus* in the normal sense. The texts give message that remarkable change in monasticism of Nepal is the blend of monastic and house holder schemes in *Buddhist* religious practice. *Newār Buddhist* practitioners seemed to follow *bodhisattva* path (*Mahāyāna*) being a *bodhisattva* who also undergoes monastic ordination but prefer to remain householder, *grihapati* in course of *Buddhist* practice. This pattern is attested by earlier *Mahāyāna* text, *Ugrapariprcchā sūtra*, an earlier *Mahāyāna* text, in which the protagonist and his companions chose to remain as householders even after obtaining ordination.<sup>877</sup> He is repeatedly referred to as eminent ‘House holder (*grihapati*)’. Such a title is, however, completely inappropriate to a renunciant, as it refers to a man’s status in lay society. The ordination ritual did not result in their (*Ugra* and his friends) becoming monk even when one is engaging in strict *Buddhist* practice, he is fundamentally dwelling at the household level.<sup>878</sup> This is very much like the system of monasticism followed in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. *Mahāyāna* quite freely portrays *bodhisattvas* as living within the framework of the traditional monastic setting.<sup>879</sup> At the point of transition from lay to monastic sections of the *sūtra*, there is the scene in which *Ugra*, the interlocutor and his friends request and receive ordination to be *Bhikṣus*, declaring that they have well understood the *Buddha*’s teaching of the superiority of monastic over the lay state, but they preferred practicing the *dharma* as the householder.<sup>880</sup> Like most *sūtras* the *Ugrapariprcchā* is highly prescriptive setting forth norms of conduct for the ideal practitioners in both categories-monastic and householders.<sup>881</sup> The text<sup>882</sup> shows

---

<sup>876</sup> A document of 1069 AD records the mortgage of land, including the property of her husband, by a *Buddhist* nun when her husband was still alive. Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 22

<sup>877</sup> Nattier, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 486), P. 38

<sup>878</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid*, P. 174

<sup>880</sup> *Ibid*, P. 62

<sup>881</sup> *Ibid*, P. 40

how a lay *bodhisattva* can lead a renunciant life in householder condition. The bifurcation of the *Buddhist* community into householder and renunciant practitioners may thus be viewed as part of the very fabric of the world within which the *Ugrapariprcchā* was produced.<sup>883</sup> *Śikṣāsamuccaya* also mentions householder monks and their engagement in household duties.<sup>884</sup> Besides, other *Buddhist* texts such as *Surangāmāsamādhi sūtra*, *Vimalkīrtinirdeśa sūtra*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, *Hevajra tantra*, *Candramahārosan tantra*, *Advayavajra Saṁgraha*, *Ādikarmapradip*, *Kriyāsamuccaya*, *Kriyā Saṁgraha* encouraged *Buddhist* practice in householder condition. In other words, *Mahāyāna* induced *Buddhist* practice through householder mode.

*Newār Buddhist* monasticism has symbolic and practical representation of all the three levels of *Buddhism*- the *Sṛāvakayāna*, *Mahāyāna*, and *Vajrayāna*. It is seen in schematic organization of *Newār* monastery, ‘*Bāhā*’ and ‘*Bahi*’. *Buddha* in the monastery appears in hierarchical form as *Śakyamuni* representing *Sṛāvakayāna*, as *Pañca-Buddha* representing *Mahāyāna*, and as *Vajrasattva* or *Vajradhara* representing *Vajrayāna*. Therefore, *Newār* monastic tradition is the embodiment of all three vehicles in hierarchical pattern. *Tantra* scriptures like *Hevajra*, *Candramāharosan tantra* also prescribe teaching in ascending order from *Sṛāvakayāna* to *Vajrayāna*. In an answer to a question “how can obdurate one be brought within the rules?”, *Hevajra tantra* gives the following instruction.<sup>885</sup>

First of all the eight precepts should be given, then the ten. Then, he should be taught the *Vaibhāṣika*, then the *Sautrāntika*. (This completes teaching *Sṛāvakayāna* part). After that he should be taught the *Yogacāra*, then *Mādhyamikā*. (This completes

<sup>882</sup> *Ugrapariprcchā* (The Inquiry of Ugra) is the most influential *Mahāyāna Sūtra*, which now does not exist in *Saṁskṛit* original. The text is believed to be formed prior to emergence of *Prajñāpāramitā*, a popular highly esteemed *Mahāyāna* text. It was among the first *Buddhist sūtra* to be transmitted from India to China. It was translated into Chinese no fewer than six times between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is available in Chinese and *Tibetan*. It is included as a part in *Ratnakuta* in *Kanjur*, the *Tibetan* canonical scripture. The great *Mahāyānapuṇḍit*, Śāntideva seems influenced by the text which he mentioned several times in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, a popular text in Nepal. Similarly, its references were cited by Kumarajiva in his translated work, *Daśabhumikavibhāsa*.

<sup>883</sup> Nattier, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 486), P. 74

<sup>884</sup> Śāntideva mentions in his *Śikṣāsamuccaya* “पुनरपरं कुलपुत्र भविष्यन्तागतेकध्वनीगृहस्थप्रव्रजिता आदिकर्मिका बोधिसत्त्वाः” (*punarparam kulaputra bhaviṣyantyāgatedhvanī grhasthapravrajita ādikarmikā bodhisattva*); P.L. Vaidya (Ed.), *Śikṣāsamuccaya of Śāntideva*, (Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-graduate studies and Research in *Saṁskṛit* learning, 1960), P.38.

<sup>885</sup> Snellgrove, *Hevajra*, 1959 II, P. 90; Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 294

*Mahāyāna* part). After he knows all (the levels of) and the way of the *Mantras*, then he should begin on *Hevajra* (*Vajrayāna* part). The pupil who lays hold with zeal will succeed, there is no doubt.

*Candramahārosan tantra* also has similar view regarding teaching of *Buddhist* doctrines. For acquiring graded teaching as above, the aspirant undergoes successive higher initiation. *Tantric Buddhist* scriptures like *Kriyā samuccaya* supports such view, and instructs that in order to receive higher initiation the practitioner should at first (i) be a monk, (ii) not be merely a monk, i.e. he should have forsaken the monk's garb. In other words the *tantric* initiate should have begun as a monk, but should have gone beyond that stage.<sup>886</sup> *Newār* monastics have followed this instruction and exercised their practice in householder pattern. The text further state that in so doing, the practitioner will not be guilty of abandoning his earlier vows including celibacy. Subsequent performance transcends the preceding one just as the lay devotee becomes a novice and the novice a monks. When a person has become a monk, is there the absence of the vows he took as lay devotee etc. ?. Of course not.<sup>887</sup> Therefore, it can be said that the most important cause behind indifferent attitude of the *Newār* practitioners towards householder pattern is the impact of *tantric* tradition.<sup>888</sup> But, leaning to *Buddhist* practice in householder had already commenced much before as it is discussed in earlier chapters.

Here, it becomes proper to quote a view of a scholar “It is important to realize how strongly the monastic ideal exists also a part of *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhism* which show the equal validity or superiority of being a *Buddhist* householder.”<sup>889</sup>

### 11.15.2 Motivation from *Jātakas* and *Avadāna*

*Jātakas* and *Avadāna* stories which were appropriated (domesticated) within *Newār Buddhism*, exposed motivation to pursue householder life by the *Buddhist* practitioners. Several *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* stories were transformed into local version in Nepal. *Citravimsati avadāna* is adopted as popular *Sṛingabheri Avadāna*

<sup>886</sup> *Kriya-samuccaya*, 3 2 ff, Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9) P. 295

<sup>887</sup> *Kriya samuccaya*, 6 3-5, *Ibid*, P. 295

<sup>888</sup> आदि बुद्ध महातंत्रे प्रयत्नेन निषेधितः गुरुमाज प्रज्ञाभिषेकेस्तु नग्नहया ब्रम्हचारिणा । *Bodhipathapradipa*, (Sārnāth: Bhot Bharatiya Granthamālā,) n. d., P.65.

<sup>889</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 59



through mythological framing it fitting to Nepalese context, and sites.<sup>890</sup> The remarkable point in *Sṛingabheri* text is the position of women. In most of the religious texts, women were condemned for not being helpful in attaining enlightenment by men, but, to the contrary, the *Avadāna* provides example that a good wife is essential for man to move towards salvation. The story is said to reveal *Buddhist* attitude toward married life that allude to an ideal of conjugal relations conflicting with the 'misogynist ascetic' perspective. Regarding *Buddhist* defense of marriage, a message is given that many *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* stories do give sense that householders could and should make their marriage and family life conform as much as possible to the teachings of the *Buddha*. Thus, householders were also encouraged in *Buddhism*. *Buddhist* ideal of recurring conjugal reunion highlighted in the story and beyond. Concept of recurring conjugal reunion is found in many *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* (*Divyāvadāna*). The connection between future *Buddha* and future Yasodharā is shown repeatedly as if they were destined to be nuptial partners much before that actually happened in *Buddha*'s life. And, future Yośodharā was reunited with the *Bodhisattva* several times. In addition, the devotees' pairing are also shown by aspiration to be husband and wife in next life to serve the *Buddha*. *Buddhist* view instructing householders to make their repeated familial relationships in successive next life was shown as fully in conformity with the *Dharma* as possible. The good spouse was essential for eventually moving along the path toward *Nirvāṇa*. The popular textual tradition like *Sṛingabheri Avadāna* inverts the monkish values. The story is told during and remembered through 'horn blowing cultural practice' in Kathmandu valley.

As far as doctrine is concerned, there are a few informal groups meeting to study under the guidance of a more learned *guru*. But for the vast mass of *Newār Buddhists* the only teaching they receive is contained, often only implicitly, in the stories of the previous lives of the *Buddha* or other saints occasionally recounted in public by learned *Vajrācāryas*. One of the reasons for the popularity of the new *Theravāda* movement is the fact that preaching by monks occupies the central place that ritual holds in traditional *Newār Buddhism*. Thus there is an enormous variation in doctrinal knowledge between the learned *Paṇḍit* and the illiterate farmer who is his hereditary parishioner, and there are innumerable degrees of knowledge between the two. And it is an essential part of the religion that there

---

<sup>890</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), P. 28

should be such hierarchy-of two levels at least-since it is forbidden for the teachings given at *Tantric* Initiation to be mentioned to the uninitiated.

### 11.16 *Buddhist* Laity

Besides the monastics represented by *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya*, there are other *Buddhist* communities who play the role of *upāsaka* and *upāsika* or *Buddhist* laity.<sup>891</sup> They are best known as *Jajamān* or *Yajamān* (parishioners) in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The laity in *Newār Buddhism* includes communities represented by the castes like *Baniyā*, *Sthāpit*, *Silanthā*, *Sikhrākār*, *Kansākār*(*Kasā*), *Śilākar*, *Tulādhar*, *Vajrakarmi*, *Marhikarmi*, *Pulupulu*, *Tatti*, *Sāyami*, *Jyāpu*, *Mālākar* or *Gathu*, *Dangu*, *Khusa* (*Tandukar*), *Ranjitkār* or *Chhipā*, *Nakarmi* or *Kau*, *Joshi*, *Pamā*, *Bhātāju*, *Bhamba*, *Kumhā*, *Nāpit* or *Nau*, *Dakami*, *Bhā* (*Kāranjit*), *Bhujan*, *Jogi* or *Kapāli*, *Po*, *Kāa*, *Neku*, *Tāmrākār*, *Gwā*, *Kulu*, *Moo*, *Thakami*, *Thaku*, *Duin*, *Boshyā*, and so forth.<sup>892</sup> These communities represented by castes have been assisting the monastics. Each community has special task to perform. Their categorization is according to their various avocations and crafts. The laity comprises the untensured class of *Baudhas* while *Vajrācārya* and *Bandyās* comprise monastic and tensured class which provide religious instructions to the formers.

It is not like that only monastics get spiritual gain, all can get the same benefit. The difference is that monastics being regular *Buddhist* practitioners give more time to religious practice than the others. From the very beginning the *Buddha* had envisaged the total *Buddhist* community consisting of monastics (*bhikkhus*, *bhikkhunis*) and lay followers *upāsakas* and *upāsikās*. Lay followers (*Upāsaka*, *upāsika*) are those who have gone for refuge to *Tri-ratna*.<sup>893</sup> In other words, a person is follower of *Buddhism* if he has taken refuge in the *Tri-ratna*- the *Buddha*, the *Dharma*, and the *Saṅgha*.<sup>894</sup> Not only that, he had even envisaged equal spiritual gains by all of them.<sup>895</sup> *Buddhist* laity are as much parts of the spiritual *Saṅgha* as the monastics. Having been placed at the high spiritual pedestal, along

<sup>891</sup> Walpola Rahula, *What the Buddha Taught*, (New York, Grove Press, 1974), P.80

<sup>892</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 602), Pp. 96-105

<sup>893</sup> *Anguttara Nikāya*, VIII, 25

<sup>894</sup> Ahir, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 541), P.12

<sup>895</sup> *Ibid*, P.9

with monastics, in the third jewel, the virtuous laity are worthy of veneration by all. No wonder, even *Sākka*, the king of gods declares in the *Samyutta-nikāya* that he worships not only the monks who live a virtuous holy life, but also laity who perform meritorious acts, are virtuous, and maintain their families righteously.

Regarding the identification of the *Newār Buddhist* laity, apart from *Bare* and some other *Buddhist* communities like *Udās*, *Citrakār*, it is difficult to define who are *Buddhists* and who are *Hindus* and for the vast majority of the population it is a meaningless question. Most writers have settled on the criterion of the family priest if the family priest is *Brāhman*, the family is *Hindu*; if he is a *Vajrācārya*, they are *Buddhists*. The criterion is valid enough for the *Hindus* too, accepting that *Newār Brāhman*s and the descendants of the courtiers of the *Malla* (most of the present “*Śreṣṭha*”) are clearly *Hindu*. Before the rise of Prithvī Nārāyan Shāha in 1769, *Śreṣṭha* made numerous donations to *Buddhist* monasteries, established *caityas* and fed monks (*Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas*) as well as establishing *Hindu* temples. And, a large number of *Śreṣṭhas* have *Vajrācārya* priests.<sup>896</sup> One of the reasons of following *Hinduism* by *Śreṣṭhas* is that *Hinduism* is the religion of ruler-ship and the *Śreṣṭha* identify themselves as *Kṣetriya* so they inclined towards *Hinduism*.<sup>897</sup> However, there are few contradictory examples of *Pradhāns* of Thamel *Bahi* in Kathmandu and *Tulādhars* tending Naradevi temple. *Pradhāns*, the former, a high class of *Śreṣṭha*, instead of being typical *Hindu* and intermarrying *Hindu* are *Buddhists* having their family priest *Vajrācārya* and the later, *Tulādhars* of *Naradevi*, being the *Buddhists* traditionally tend *Hindu* temple, *Naradevi*. However, there is the room for thought that the deity enshrined inside *Naradevi* temple could be *Basundharā*, a *Buddhist* deity.<sup>898</sup> The assumption seems tenacious as *Tulādhars* are basically *Buddhist*. The lay devotees (*upāsaka*) patronized the monks, supported them, listened to their teachings and shaped their private lives according to the teachings of the *Buddha*. Yet they were still members of society, as caste-structured *Hindu* society, and had to be initiated, married, etc according to their tradition. Among laity group *Maharjans* are peculiar because they equally render to both *Buddhist* and *Hindu* religions. There are numerous examples in India and Nepal of kings who were considered to be *Buddhist*, yet did not cut themselves off from *Hindu* society nor from the services of the *Brāhman*s. King Narendradeva

<sup>896</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 55-56

<sup>897</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>898</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 60

who ruled Nepal in the middle of the seventh century, was considered a *Buddhist* by the Chinese traveler who met him, yet in his inscriptions he used Śaivite titles. Besides caste structure regarding the laity, there was no sharp distinction between the *Buddha's* regular *upāsaka* and the non *upāsaka* in the lay world. Anybody can become *upāsaka* simply by taking refuge in the *Buddha*, he does not have to alter his status in the social order. In other words there was no incongruity in one's becoming an *upāsaka* and at the same time maintaining one's customary family duties, religious and social, provided they did not offend the obligatory rules, non killing etc. This must have been the reason that *Hindu* image icons found way to *Buddhist* shrine and are also worshipped. It can be corroborated to following *Buddhism* by the *Hindu* people. Such scenes were seen also in Nālandā- the great *Buddhist* monastery of India where several evidences revealed that *Buddhism* was also supported by followers of *brāhmanical* creeds. Sometimes seals with *brāhmanical* emblems appeared side by side with monastic icons.<sup>899</sup>

*Newār Buddhism* proved to be compelling popular tradition which motivated lay householders to support the monastic elites (monks) and to commit themselves to taking refuge in the *Tri-ratna* and *Buddhism* could survive and expand throughout the history.<sup>900</sup> *Buddhism* attracted ascetics with myriad meditative regimens, philosophers with vast doctrinal discourse and its mainstream traditions cultivating exemplary stories that defined living rightly in the world and rituals designed to help householders. Certain popular and ritual texts contributed much to *Buddhist* religious life providing paradigms regarding the pragmatic adaptation of the faith. Those texts also help understanding of *Newār Buddhist* tradition as *Newār Buddhism* offers an example of how *Mahāyāna* masters extended their service to householders beyond instruction in salvation oriented belief and practice so as to organize the performance of rituals.

There is a communion between monastics and laity through celebration of *Buddhist* festivals involving processions of statues through towns, public story telling, public religious singing (*bhajan*) and observances like *vrata*. Without such activities the religion would be no more than an exercise of recluse monks. Rituals played the importance in maintaining householders' adherence to *Buddhism* and to unify *Buddhist* communities, both spiritually and socially. Development of *Buddhist*

<sup>899</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 61-62

<sup>900</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Preface, P. xiii

ritualism and the ritual innovation of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, were the skillful means to bring laity into the religion. Rituals are important channel to reach the lay community and these have served as the pragmatic means for the laity to achieve health, prosperity, good luck, longevity, peace, good rebirth, progeny which are near universal wishes of humanity.<sup>901</sup>

There is a unique working pattern between the monastics and the laity. The materials needed for the monastics in carrying out the rituals and monastic activities are prepared and provided by the laity. For example various art pieces and painting requisites are fulfilled by *Chitrakār*, the traditional painters or art makers; herbal requirements are provided by the *Baniyās*, the traditional herbs traders; agricultural products and labours are supplied by *Maharjans*, and so forth. Each *Buddhist* community has something to contribute to run the monasticism in Nepal. All these communities play their part being the members of concerned *guthī* to run a religious task. *Newārs* are remarkably highlighted as able artisans, and efficient planners adapting and domesticating Indic ideals beautifully into their art.

#### 11.16.1 Mercantile laity

The duty of giving (*dāna*)- to *Buddhas*, *Bodhisattvas* or the *Saṅgha*- is presented as the best investment for making maximum *punya*. Wealthy merchants made lavish *dāna* to triple gems. Connection between *Buddhism* and trade is established and it is reminded that wealth, though not the summum bonum, is ubiquitously held up as the reward for moral uprightness and pious generosity. Many later texts continue the promise of worldly blessings (for wealth) to the laity in return for adhering to *Buddhist* norms and some *Buddhist* texts explicitly promise success in trade as reward for meritorious services. The early missionary success of *Buddhist* monasticism must therefore be linked to the devout patronage and service of the laity of mercantile class and in fact administrative practice of monastic officials depended upon generosity of the merchants. The spread of *Buddhist* tradition itself motivated trans-regional trade; the alliances and wealth generated affected the entire Indo-sinic region which came under the web of *Buddhist* monasticism. This is what had happened everywhere. The role of *Newār* merchants is significant and of the trans-Himalayan *Buddhist* trade network must be emphasized in the histories of both Nepalese and Tibetan civilization. *Newārs* for at least a thousand years

---

<sup>901</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 7-9

were highly sought artisans across Tibet. It is so mentioned that for over 5 centuries, *Newārs* desiring the classical celibate monastic disciple, could take ordination in the local Tibetan *viḥāras*.<sup>902</sup> This also proves that there were celibate Nepalese monks, though preference goes to non celibate householder type. It is also pointed out that *Newār Lhāsā* traders sponsored the majority of extraordinary patronage events to the *Newār Saṅgha*. There is separate mercantile community of mercantile class represented by *Tulādhars* who are divided into several sub castes like *Kansākār*, *Baniyā*, *Tāmrakār*, *Śilpakār*, *Sthāpit*, *Sindhurākār*, and so forth they existed to be sincere *Buddhist* laity. Therefore it said that it is unthinkable for *Vajrācāryas*, *Śākyas*, or *Tulādhars* to be anything other than *Buddhist*. But, it became hard for *Tulādhar* to accept the supremacy of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*, (may be because of arrogance of the later or displeased with diminishing profundity of scholarship among *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*), they are deviated from sticking to traditional *Newār Buddhism* and nowadays, most of *Tulādhars* are inclined to alternative forms of *Buddhism- Theravāda* and *Tibetan Buddhism*.

### 11.17 Life cycle rites/Sacraments

Members of *Buddhist* communities became *Buddhist* by birth, remain *Buddhist* by their culture, and die as *Buddhist* through conduction of various life cycle rites/sacraments according to *Buddhist* norms and scriptures. There are ten major sacraments popularly known as '*Daśakarma*'<sup>903</sup> meaning ten rites. There are other supplementary or subsidiary rites called locally as *upakriyā*. However, enlistment of major rites of *Daśakarma* is found variable in some texts. The rites treated as major in one book may have been kept under *upakarma* in the other. The *Daśakarmavidhi* consists of ten ceremonial rites beginning from the birth of a baby among *Buddhist Newārs* in general and *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* in particular.

The performance of the *Daśakarmavidhi* are mostly based on the texts *Kriyā samgraha*, *Kriyā Samuccaya* and *Subahupariprccha tantra* originally compiled by the famous scholar, Pt. Kuladattācārya, in order to facilitate the performance of rituals practiced by priestly *Vajrācārya*.<sup>904</sup>

<sup>902</sup> *Ibid*, P. 53

<sup>903</sup> Badriratna Bajracharya, *Nepālya Boudha Dharmay Daśakarma Sanskāra Dharma*, (Kathmandu: Mrs. Mahili Bajracharya, *Itum bāhā*, 2061 B.S), P. 25

<sup>904</sup> *Ibid*

Regarding life cycle rites *Buddhism* was not at first a religion of life in the world.<sup>905</sup> But when it has to thrive in society in association of laity, lifecycle rites have been integrated. Incorporation of the life cycle rites of *Buddhist* householders is not surprising when communities came to be caste in a specifically *Buddhist* form. The rites are not followed by the *vajrayānists* elsewhere except in Nepal. So it can be called specialty of Nepal. In *Theravāda* today there are usually only two specifically *Buddhist* life cycle rituals: the local equivalent of Monastic initiation i.e. temporary ordination and death rituals. Rituals to receive alms, to recite protective formulae, to carry out religious acts which are appropriate to any occasion are additional. *Buddhist* death rituals also express specific values according to *Buddhist* norms. Below given is the list of rites under *Daśakarma* presently followed at present.<sup>906</sup>

S. No.	Sanskrit name of rite	Newārī name	Meaning
1	<i>Garbhādhāna</i>	<i>Bārhā tayagu</i>	Attainment of puberty
2	<i>Puṇṣavan</i>		Wishing for male child
3	<i>Simantonayan</i>	<i>Dhaubaji Nakegu</i>	Hair parting/wish for right foetal position
4	<i>Jātakarma</i>	<i>Machābu byankegu</i>	Birth purification rite
5	<i>Nāmākaran</i>	<i>Nām chuyegu</i>	Naming the child
6	<i>Annaprāśan</i>	<i>Machā Junko</i>	First rice feeding ceremony
7	<i>Cudākarma</i>	<i>Busan Khāyegu</i>	First head shaving
8	<i>Vratadeśana/ Śilapradān</i>	<i>Bare chuyegu Kayatā pūjā</i>	Monastic ordination/ Beginning of learning Loin-cloth worship
9	<i>Vrata-mokṣan/ Vrata-samāvartan</i>	<i>Cīvar totegu</i>	Return to householder life
10	<i>Paṇigrahaṇa</i>	<i>Vivāh yāyegu</i>	Wedding

Table 17. showing Ten sacraments, *Daśa karma* done in Buddhist way

(Rites from 1 to 3 belong to pre-natal, rites from 4 to 9 to childhood, and 10<sup>th</sup> rite to adult)

<sup>905</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 197

<sup>906</sup> (i) *Ibid*

(ii) Naresh Man Vajracharya, *Daśakarma* in *Paleswān*. *Daśakarma* mentioned by pundit Ashakaji is different. Probably, the puṇḍit gave the *Daśakarma* rites specially followed by the Śākyas and *Vajrācāryas*.

Actually, life processes need not be done, they proceed naturally. These naturally occurring events can not be avoided, they happen even though individuals do not pay attention to them. Male and female make nuptial tie, the female conceives and gives birth to a baby. The baby grows through different phases, he receives first liquid diet, then reaches for solid diet after some period, undergoes his first cutting of hair, attains puberty, leaves home to learn the knowledge, becomes old with successive stages, and finally dies. The civilized family persons learnt to mark every such important stages of life in their own style according to their faith and religious norms. Life processes which flow naturally are let to be done in civilized way. *Samskāras* (sacraments), *rites de passage* or threshold crossing, popularly known as *Daśakarma* marks the important stages of individual's life from conception to death. It is through these activities, a man's identity is established in the society. *Buddhists* of *Nepal-maṇḍala* also have their own *Buddhist* style of carrying out such life cycle rites appropriating several *Buddhist* rituals built upon *Buddhist* scriptures, which are performed by *Vajrācāryas*. It is interesting to note that such rites, *Daśakarma* is also conferred to the deity images while consecration signifying their entrance to *Buddhist* circle. Only after the sanctification of images of gods and goddesses with *Daśakarma* ceremonial rites they are supposed to be enlivened. Likewise it is also unique to have *Daśakarma* repeatedly done in succession to old persons in old age initiation *Burā Junko* rendering him divine status. In order to purify and consecrate a human life, either physically or spiritually, the *Daśakarmavidhi* is considered vitally important.

*Daśakarma* also synonymously known as *Daśakriyā* or *Daśakarmakriyā* or *Daśa - vidhi-kriyā* seems to have been tailored by the *Buddhist* masters appropriating *Buddhist* philosophy, ethics and *Buddhist* teachings or purpose. *Daśakarma* rites are commonly followed by the *Newār Buddhists* irrespective of monastics and laity. It is interesting to note that the first monastic initiation is utilized as one of the major life cycle sacrament under *cudākarma* virtually maintaining equality among monastics and laity. Conduction of *Daśakarma* for one's family represents the fulfillment of one's duty as a *Mahāyāna Buddhist* householder.<sup>907</sup>

---

<sup>907</sup> *Ibid*, P. 201



In every life cycle ritual, *Guru-maṇḍalā* rite is performed. It is conducted according to prevalent *Buddhist* rituals with *Gurumaṇḍala pūjā*, *Dipa pūjā*, *Nirañjanpūjāvidhi*, *Saptavidhānuttara pūjā*, *Kalaśa pūjā*. In every rites, offerings like *pañcadān* and *bhojan* are made to the monastics, and wish is expressed to become *Buddha* for the welfare of all followed by *Balyārcan* satisfying protective (*Lokpāl*) deities. In every step, *Buddhist gāthā* or *mantra* or *dhāraṇī* are chanted. For example while performing *Garbhādhānakarma*, a *Gāthā* (stanza) for good Owen (*Mangal gāthā*) as follows is recited while pouring water from the vessel (*Kalaśāviṣeka*) to the incumbent girl- *Om Sarva Tathāgata abhiṣekasamaśriyetyadi*- meaning let blessing from all *Buddhas* be showered upon you (to the girl). Famous *Buddhist* stanza as under is also often recited several times while worshipping with baked barley, in every event- *Ye dharmā hetu prabhavā hetu te sām tathāgato hyuvadatah, te sām ca yo nirodha ivam vādi Mahāsramaṇa*. Such rituals are carried out mostly through socially recognized *Vajrācārya*. In this way a ritual framework expressing the soteriological aims of the Great way (*Mahāyāna*) using the means of the Diamond way (*Vajrayāna*) has been designed and provided for all of the life cycle rites of *Newār Buddhists*. *Daśakarma* is observed inviting relatives and friends. In some events presence of maternal uncles, and paternal aunts became compulsory. Such socialization of *Daśakarma* has added validity and witness to the events.

Observance of *Daśakarma* by Nepalese *Buddhists* in buddhistic way with perfect recitation of *Buddhist* scriptures, hymns, rituals, teachings has on one hand continued the formation of *Buddhist* laity, and it had made the *Buddhist* tradition lively on the other hand. Observances like *Daśakarma* also provided the platform for interactions between the monastics and the laity. Now *Daśakarma* had become unique *Buddhist* culture of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

The *Daśakarmavidhi* (ten rites of passage) are performed in two different purposes, namely *jnāna-sambhara* (accumulation of knowledge) and *punya-sambhara* (accumulation of merits). The former refers to prerequisites of spiritual knowledge, while the latter to prerequisites of action.<sup>908</sup> Even the *Buddha* is said to have spiritually performed the *Daśakarma* before his attainment of Buddhahood. According to local belief, one cannot achieve enlightenment without undergoing

---

<sup>908</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 750), P. 23

the *Daśakarma*, either spiritually or ritually.<sup>909</sup> The system of the *Daśakarma* is so instilled in the life of every *Buddhist Newār* that the rites have become part and parcel of the life-cycle thus, presenting as inseparable traditional and cultural rites unique among human beings on earth.

#### 11.18 *Gyānmālā Bhajan*

Public story telling is a common practice in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, which attract laity to the *Dharma*. Many *Vajrācāryas* play a role of folklorist, telling publicly stories of *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* inculcating *Buddhist* moral lessons in general people. Likewise, laity and the monastics also used *Gyānmālā bhajan* (religious singing) about tenets of *Buddhist* teachings. They sing along with musics at the religious shrines on occasions and festival time and also on regular basis especially in the mornings and evening. There are separate group of people engaging in *Gyānmālā bhajans* which have become effective way in bonding laity to the *dharma*. It is observed that with the growing popularity of *Gyānmālā Bhajan*, public story telling practice is diminishing and are being displaced. Now, *Buddhist* stories are contained in such *bhajans* which are sung in lyrical way with musics during *Buddhist* events and festivals.

---

<sup>909</sup> *Ibid*,

## CHAPTER XII

### Continuity and Changes in Monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*

*Buddhism* was waxed and waned over the ages in most of the countries, over half of the present world population live in areas where *Buddhism* is, or has been a dominant cultural force.<sup>910</sup> As circumstances differ, *Buddhist* monasticism varies considerably in different countries. The most notable difference is found between monasticism of the *Śrāvakyāna* of Southern parts like Srilanka, Myānmar, Thailand etc and the *Mahāyāna* Order of Northern parts like in China, Japan, and Korea, along with extreme adaptations in Nepal, Tibet and Outer Mongolia. Continuity and change are functions of Impermanence which is the one among the three characteristics of the world, while suffering and soullessness are the other two according to *Buddhism*.<sup>911</sup> That means, in other words, every worldly thing is changing. *Buddhism* teaches us about the change. According to *Buddhism* every thing both biotic and abiotic in the world is impermanent. Here, *Buddha*'s last admonition becomes worthy of mention- 'Subject to change are all worldly components, strive diligently for deliverance'.<sup>912</sup> And, whatever is impermanent or changing is the suffering and so is without self. Therefore, these three aspects Impermanence, Suffering and Selflessness are among the core philosophy of *Buddhism*.

Change is inevitable. So, the mode of *Buddhist* teaching and practice is also subject to change. It significantly underwent change from earlier types (*Sthaviravāda*, *Mahāsāṃghikā* etc.) to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. By the time of Indian Emperor Aśoka (272-232 BCE) the change in *Buddhism* was reflected in the formation of eighteen different *Buddhist* sects.<sup>913</sup> Due to further changes, the sects proliferated

<sup>910</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P.1

<sup>911</sup> *Trilakṣaṇa* (*anitya*, *dukkha*, and *anātma*) = the three characteristics of the world (Impermanence suffering and soullessness)

<sup>912</sup> 'Vayadhammā saṃkhārā, appamādena sampādettha'

Narada, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 556), Pp. 248-249

<sup>913</sup> Bapat, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 115ii), P. 87

to about 34 sects whose presence was revealed by various *Buddhist* literature.<sup>914</sup> The change is still undergoing. From a decade, a new word is being heard in *Buddhist* arena. It is about applied *Buddhism* or Engaged *Buddhism* which can be given as an example of new outcome of continuous change in application of *Buddhist* teachings. Therefore, *Buddhism* is labeled also as a world religion in the sense that it has been able to adapt to a variety of social systems.<sup>915</sup> *Buddhism* proved to have a great adaptability. It is due to this feature of *Buddhism* that we have different forms like Japanese *Buddhism*, Korean *Buddhism*, Tibetan *Buddhism*, Chinese *Buddhism*, Thai *Buddhism*, Srilankan *Buddhism* and so forth. Each form has again subtypes. It is quite wonderful to note that keeping the main essence of *Buddhist* teachings intact, various modes of teaching and practices which assimilated the local values of the place whereupon it entered, gave rise to such a variety of forms of *Buddhism*.

Partially variation can be attributed to differences in the scriptural and doctrinal traditions that were received in different parts of the *Buddhist* world. Additionally, local concessions to social, geographical, political and climatic conditions have been adopted by most monastic orders in order to smooth the integration of monks into local communities, and to ensure that monastics live in a safe and reasonable manner. The result is that each *Buddhist* country or region has a distinctive ‘flavour’ or appearance. Monastically the difference can be quite superficial with connections to the traditional values. Each tradition also has a different approach to practice-the *Buddhist* monasticism.

When *Buddhism* was first introduced into China, the Chinese were long unfavorable to the implications of monastic life and after they admitted the *Saṅgha* it was basically changed in the process. *Buddhism* started as a religion renouncing all family and social ties, yet in the inscriptions one meets again and again with prayers for well being of deceased ancestors uttered even by monks and nuns. These expressions of piety indicate that although the monks and nuns had joined the monastic order, their relation to family and ancestors still remained strong and enduring. This is a specific example of how *Buddhism* had adapted itself to contemporary social conditions in China.<sup>916</sup> In Tibet (now in China), *Buddhism* got

---

<sup>914</sup> Hirakawa, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 274), P. 115

<sup>915</sup> Bechert, Forword, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 143), Pp. 7-8

<sup>916</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181i), P. 57

established in 8<sup>th</sup> century after being adapted to pre-*Buddhist* Bon religious mindset. Now, *Tibetan* type *Buddhism* is spreading outside Tibet in the world.

Japan followed the lead of China, and in both countries the monastic concept was tailored to fit the national pattern. The basic difference was the creation of the *obōsan* or *sāmā* (sometimes also called *bonze*) in Japan and the incorporation of ancestor worship into Chinese monasticism. A Japanese *obōsan* is comparable to *Vajrācārya* of Nepal as he may marry, but still works as a monk or priest who supports a particular temple, and is often responsible for priestly function for a certain quota of families.

Though *Buddhist* monasticism had undergone several changes from simplicity to complexity or vice versa in due course of time depending upon time period, sectarian views, location and so forth, it is still continuing in most parts of the world including Nepal. Nepal is the only country in the world where *Buddhism* originated during the time of the *Buddha* and continued unabatedly even today. As mentioned above, monasticism is always present in all *Buddhist* traditions and Nepal is no exception. In other words, *Buddhist* monasticism continued to exist in Nepal though it had undergone several changes. *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal may be viewed continuous in terms of continuous prevalence of *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The continuity of monasticism in Nepal has been proved on the basis of perennially existing monasteries and their *Saṅgha* tradition. The available sources like inscriptions, manuscripts, texts, colophons and other published materials, public hearsay also confirm it. If there was no continuity of monasticism in Nepal, the *Buddhism* must have ceased to exist long before as in India. Nonetheless, as discussed earlier under the heading of components of monasticism, the major components of *Buddhist* monasticism had almost remained same throughout the history. Changes were seen mostly in paraphernalia and details of the components. Regarding the *Buddha*, in place of or in addition to *Śākyamuni Buddha*, *Pañca-Buddha*, *Dīpaṅkar Buddha* and *Saptatathāgata* and other *Buddhas* like *Puṣpaketu Rājāya*, *Bhaiṣajya Tathāgata*, *Amitayūṣa* etc are also popular in Nepal. Above all there is *Ādi Buddha* who is personified as *Vajradhara* and *Vajrasattva*. As concept of *Trikāya* is widely accepted in *Mahāyāna/Vajrayāna Buddhism*, such *Buddhas* have significance along with *Śākyamuni Buddha*. Besides, exoteric form of the *Buddha*, there can be esoteric forms too like *Heruka Cakrasamvara*, *Yogāmvar*, *Hevajra* etc. In the case of *Dharma*, Nepalese

*Buddhists* have their own set of scriptures called *Nava grantha* or *nava Vaipulya sūtra* in place of *Tripitaka*. This is another uniqueness seen only in Nepal. Similarly, regarding the *Saṅgha*, Nepalese have honoured *Aṣṭa-Bodhisattvas* namely *Samantabhadra*, *Mañjuśrī*, *Vajrapāṇī*, *Gaṅganā*, *Sarvanivaranviskāmbi*, *Kṣitigarbha*, *Khagarbha*, and *Maitreya*. *Avlokiteśwar* is usually shown above eight celestial *bodhisattva*. *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* are regarded as house holder monks, who have been dealt separately in the chapter.<sup>917</sup> Scriptural base is also maintained to justify changes adopted in Nepalese monasticism. Therefore, *Newār Buddhism* is also a complete *Buddhism* with its own system of monasticism, as it has been characterized.

*Newār Buddhism* was subjected to adaptations and development in a cultural and geographical setting. While it became successful in keeping continuity preserving so many elements of continuity which transcend periodization of history, it incorporated many changes. The monasticism and culture *Buddhism* has taught in Nepal and the *Saṅgha* and monasteries it propagated undoubtedly still survived; in fact, it remains to this day as a vital functioning part of our cultural heritage. In its progress through long centuries, it continually annexed to itself the culture and art, the traditions and folk lores, the pieties and emotions of the people.

Almost all major *Buddhist* sects that appeared in the *Buddhist* history had made their presence in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The great Chinese traveler, Hiuen Tsang (629-645AD) in his travel account mentioned presence of some 2000 monks in *Nepal-maṇḍala* belonging to *Hinayāna* (*Śrāvakyāna*) and *Mahāyāna*.<sup>918</sup> Presence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect and *Vajrayāna* sect (the deep rooted form of *Mahāyāna*) is indicated and proved by *Lichchavī* inscriptions. *Sarvāstivādins* and *Caityavādins* are known to have existed in Nepal through various *Buddhist* texts related to them and *caitya* culture is still prevalent in Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition. Essence of all these *Buddhist* sects mixed with the local flavour of the valley had contributed to the uniqueness of present Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism which remained as a field of curiosity for all mainly the foreigners. Nepalese monastics had come out with unique form of *Buddhism* which was skillfully and wisely designed at the time of adverse situation when normal practice became nearly impossible for several reasons during early medieval period. Still they methodically planned,

<sup>917</sup> For details, please see Chapter XI '*Saṅgha*-the functional unit of Monasticism'

<sup>918</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 238), Pp. 9-10

maneuvered, executed maintaining scriptural and doctrinal bases and nothing was done unsystematically by their own fake fabrication. They saved *Buddhist* monasticism from being wiped out as it happened in India. Therefore, major changes are noticeable in Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. However, the study of *Buddhist* monasticism has, to be sure, been hampered by the availability of significantly less documentation. Even available documents have not been explored adequately and fully utilized properly from the perspective of monasticism. There is a comparative wealth of inscriptional data of *Lichchavī* period and colophons of Medieval period bearing on the situational and institutional history of monastic *Buddhism* that has yet to be fully used. Though previous chapters are also devoted to dealing in continuity and change in *Buddhist* monasticism of *Nepal-maṇḍala*, an attempt is made here to enumerate the major remarkable changes categorically as follows.

## 12.1 Major changes

### 12.1.1 Celibate to Non celibate monasticism

The most remarkable change in *Newār* monasticism is the emergence of householder monks and complete disappearance celibate ones. At present it is entirely at the hands of non celibate monastics. Most of the scholars considered this conversion to have been occurred suddenly. And, often Jayasthitimalla or Śankarācārya were blamed for it.<sup>919</sup> Both were charged against intentional and vehement denigration of *Buddhist* order by their enforcement of unfriendly laws and regulation forcing the monks and nun to marry and lead household life towards to end of 13<sup>th</sup> century. There is a saying that Śankarācārya, the *Hindu* reformer, philosopher and mystic, probably the seventh incarnation vanquished in debate *Grihastha Ācāryas* of Kathmandu valley and enforced unruly practices in *Buddhist* monasticism.<sup>920</sup> If this incidence is true, it indicates the presence of householder *Ācāryas* during Śankarācārya's time.<sup>921</sup> In that case how could he impose marriage among *Buddhist* monks who were already householders?. Many blamed the king Jayasthitimalla and his alleged introduction of the caste system. But, the current study reveals that this was the gradual change taking place till the complete disappearance of celibate monks. There is no proof that Śankarācārya or

---

<sup>919</sup> Please see Chapter VII 'History of Monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*', for other details.

<sup>920</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>921</sup> Greenwold, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 36), Pp. 144-145

Jayasthitimalla abolished tradition of celibate monachism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Following Dharmaswāmin's account of 14<sup>th</sup> century also, it is evident that few monasteries presumably had celibate monks who did not disrobe in order to become married householders.<sup>922</sup> Siegfried Leinhard relates regrettably without citing his source that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (well after Jayasthitimalla who lived in the 13<sup>th</sup> AD.), there were still some 25 monasteries in Patan with celibate monks.<sup>923</sup> Similarly, the account of Vanratna (1384-1469) of 15<sup>th</sup> century who stayed at Pintu *Bahi*, with his other celibate colleagues also justify the saying.<sup>924</sup> It is so mentioned that for over 5 centuries, *Newārs* desiring the classical celibate monastic discipline, could take ordination in the local *Tibetan vihāras (Gompas)*. This also proves that there were celibate Nepalese monks, though preference goes to non celibate householder type.<sup>925</sup> However, celibate monasticism is included in *Newār Buddhism*, to be a first step towards higher statuses. Full celibate monasticism has highest prestige in some forms of *Buddhism* like *Tharavādi Buddhism*, *Gelugspā* order of *Tibetan Buddhism* while within *Mahāyāna Buddhism* there are many opposing views.<sup>926</sup>

Disappearance of celibate monks could not be tied to a specific event or a person nor that it could be precisely located in time. Introduction of householder into the *Buddhist Saṅgha* is already evinced by Nagarjunākonda inscription of second century, belonging to *Mahāsāṃghikā*. Once entry of the householder to the *Saṅgha* was made, the door was opened for the householder monks.<sup>927</sup> Similarly, *Sarvāstivādin* literature like *Mūlsarvāstivāda Vinaya vastu*, and *Vinaya Sūtra* reveal how there established a class of householder monks within the *saṅgha*.<sup>928</sup> Furthermore, many consider that the complete disappearance of celibate monkhood

---

<sup>922</sup> D.R. Regmi, *Medieval Nepal Part I: Early Medieval Period 750 -1530 AD*, (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1965), P. 561. Also see Chapter VII 'History of Monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*'

<sup>923</sup> Bechert, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 143), P. 110.

<sup>924</sup> Punya Prasad Parajuli, "Mahāpuṇḍit Vanratnako Nepali Boudha Dharmamā Yogadān" in *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Vol. 37, No. 2, July 2010, (Kathmanu: CNAS, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, 2010), *Op.cit.* (f.n. 321), Pp. 261-282

<sup>925</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), P. 53

<sup>926</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 60

<sup>927</sup> Dutta, *Op. cit.* (f. n. 358), Pp. 647-648. Also see Chapter VIII, Sectarian Influence for other details

<sup>928</sup> Please see Chapter VIII 'Sectarian Influence....' for further details.



in Nepal is a local development that eventually occurred after *Buddhism* vanished in India. However, the decline of celibate monkhood in *Newār Buddhism* is not a unique case, but can be compared to similar development in East Asian *Mahāyāna* countries. Several contemporary *Buddhist* texts also attest to the evolution of householder monastic.<sup>929</sup> Scholars like Leinhard also opined that the great changes in monasticism did not happen suddenly, but came about slowly, and did not clearly occur until after the disconnection of Nepalese *Buddhists* from India.<sup>930</sup> Otherwise, religious situation in Nepal valley was similar to that of pre-islamic India, with many schools and sects of late *Buddhism*.

Domestication of *Newār* monasticism is supposed to have taken place by the later *Malla* era (1475 -1769 CE). Monks became householders who patri-lineages became castes that with only a few exception, did not admit outsiders. The term conventional *Saṅgha* is used by the Scholars like Peter Harvey for the *Buddhist Saṅgha* comprising of married monks.<sup>931</sup> Legitimacy regarding householder monks has been already discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>932</sup> It is justifiable in saying that the complete disappearance of celibate monkhood and its substitution by householder monks in Nepal is a local development that eventually occurred after *Buddhism* vanished in India. However, it was done on the basis of available *Buddhist* scriptures. Moreover, the institution of married householder monks was prevalent in Nepal when *Buddhism* was still flourishing in India.<sup>933</sup>

### 12.1.2 Change in ordination pattern

Ordination is a door to monasticism. Unless one undergoes ordination (*pravajyā*), s/he is not considered monastic. There are some major changes regarding ordination in Nepal though its meaning, and purpose remained same throughout the history.

---

<sup>929</sup> Please see Chapter IX 'Monastic life style'

<sup>930</sup> Leinhard, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 8), P. 110

<sup>931</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P. 217

<sup>932</sup> For details, please see Chapter XI. The *Saṅgha*-the Functional unit of Monasticism, under the heading householder monks in *Buddhism*.

<sup>933</sup> Rospatt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 519), P. 178

### 12.1.2.1 Temporary celibacy:

Although there is tradition of being monk (*bhikkhu*) initially after taking *Pravajyā* (ordination) in a monastery and getting fully attached to that particular monastery, the ordained person needs not be celibate monk for rest of the life except for stipulated mandatory period of normally four days. One has to perform as celibate full fledged monk compulsorily at the time of ordination to be the member of *San̄gha* of the monastery. The act of being monk and taking ordination in the monastery is called *Bare chuyegu* in local *Newārī* language or *chudākarma* which has already been discussed in the Chapter ‘Monastic Life Style in *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. However, *cudākarma* is not appropriate word for *bare chuyegu* meaning making monk. After *bare chuyegu* the ordained person is regarded as *Śākyabhikkhu* and given the membership into the *San̄gha* of the concerned monastery and member of *Śākya* community. If he further undergoes initiation called *Ācāryābhiṣeka* in the esoteric chamber of the monastery, he becomes *Vajrācārya* and the member of *Vajrācārya* community. Thus, the Nepalese *Buddhist San̄gha* primarily consists of groups of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*. All *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas* must undergo *pravajyā* (ordination) in a monastery according to the procedures as directed in the old text “*Kriyā Saṁgraha*”<sup>934</sup> which is supposed to have been written by Nagarjunapāda and commentated by *Ācāryā Mahā Paṇḍit* Kuladutta of supposedly 12<sup>th</sup> century, that they all are householder monks not celibate monks. A *Vajrācārya* remains the member of *San̄gha* of the monastery where he was given ordination and also the member of greater national *Vajrācārya San̄gha* called “*De Ācā Gu*”. Though past history<sup>935</sup> reveals that any desirous person can become *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* after obtaining ordination and proven high *Buddhist* scholarship, later these titles (*Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*) got transformed into castes and the tradition of conferring ordination, initiation is now confined to these castes only. *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* together with other *Buddhist* followers’ group form a vital and energetic community of practitioners who adhere to a set of practices revolving around the narratives of the *Svayambhū purāṇa*.<sup>936</sup>

<sup>934</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 173)

<sup>935</sup> Bajracharya, *Op. cit.* (f.n. 174)

<sup>936</sup> *Svayambhu Purāṇa*, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 720),

### 12.1.2.2 Use of *Pañcarakṣā* text as ritual tool

It is also notable to know use of *Pañcarakṣā* text as one of the ritual tools in the process of Nepalese ordination.<sup>937</sup> The text is also used while introducing the neophyte to the *Vajrācārya Saṅgha* at *Svayambhū*.<sup>938</sup> There is tradition of recitation of *Pañcarakṣā* seeking protection of all sentient beings during important gathering like *Pravajyā* ceremony. *Pañcarakṣā* including the *Dhāraṇī* and related stories regarding each of the five *Pañcarakṣā* female deities is one of the most copied and used *Newār Buddhist* text.<sup>939</sup> Popularity of *Pañcarakṣā* can be corroborated with then pre-modern situation in *Buddhist* history, which was rife with relevant diseases occurrence of epidemics, and local beliefs concerned. The time was marked with very low infant mortality rate. *Mahākāśyapa Avadāna* mentions that those who get married must hear the loud bewailing of their wives uttered at the time of their offspring's passing away from this world.<sup>940</sup> In such situation, the text like *Pañcarakṣā* found profound use.

*Pañcarakṣā* text is also recited as a part of activities during *De Ācārya Guṭhī* gathering at *Śāntipur Svayambhū*. The scripture *Pañcarakṣā* is used as one of the ritual tool in ordination process. The *vajra* master holds it in hand and the novice's head is touched with the scripture. But this practice is not seen in Lalitpur.

### 12.1.2.3 Abandonment of *Upasampadā*

As universal to all *Buddhist* traditions, the *Pravajyā*<sup>941</sup> ordination is essential for every individual who desires the membership of the *Saṅgha* and follow *Buddhist* monasticism. The neophyte with due faith obtains *Pravajyā* before being a member of the *Saṅgha*. The meaning of *Pravajyā*, the initial conversion and entry into the monasticism is retained in several *Buddhist* literature. In most of the current *Buddhist* traditions like in *Theravāda*, the initial monk initiation is the *Pravajyā* which provides license to monkhood. Later, the ordained monk receives higher ordination called *Upasampadā* entering main-stream monkhood. But, in the case of *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, *Upasampadā* is not taken. In its place, several other

<sup>937</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), Pp. 143-44

<sup>938</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 196),

<sup>939</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), P. 119

<sup>940</sup> *Ibid*, P. 120

<sup>941</sup> Please see 'Monastic Admission' in Chapter IX "Monastic Life Style"

forms of higher initiations are given to the ordained *Pravrajita* according to *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* pantheons. This is the main significance crucial to *Newār Buddhist* tradition which stood on their own philosophy and hermeneutic mandated by *Buddhist* literature of later phase. Later initiation is the gateway to *Vajrayāna* practice. The initiation confers upon one the requisite power to accomplish Buddhahood through meditation upon a particular *Buddha* deity.<sup>942</sup>

In the Nepalese context, instead of undergoing the next step of higher ordination called *Upasampadā*, the ordained novice seeks permission to lead life of householder monk. Since he already had received ten *śikṣāpada* and committed to serving Triple Gems and undergoes other succeeding higher initiations, he still reserves the status of monk and is allowed membership of the monk community-the *Saṅgha*. It cannot be denied that later *Mahāyānic Bodhisattva* ideals, *Vajrayānic* philosophy and path provided him enough ground to practice *dharma* being a householder monk. The causes of omission of *Upasampadā* in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism and possible intended objectives have been already discussed in the previous chapter, Monastic lifestyle.

Except for *Upasampadā*, the process or ceremony of *Buddhist* ordination has remained almost substantially same throughout the history from ancient time after the formation of residential *Saṅgha*.<sup>943</sup> This equally applies to Nepalese context too. It is remarkable to note that in the ritual text book of *Newār Buddhist*, the *Kriyāsaṃgrahapañjikā*, only details on *Pravajyā*, locally known as *bare chuyegu* are featured omitting the procedure of *Upasampadā* part.<sup>944</sup> This clearly shows that the text is specially meant for Nepalese *Buddhists*, and such type of *Newār* ordination existed before the period of Kuladutta i.e. 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>945</sup> The abandonment of *Upasampadā* must have exempted *Newār Buddhists* from being full fledged monks complying with more than 200 *Vinaya* rules including observance of celibacy, facilitates concession of pursuing practice in householder set up. Some opine that *Newār* monastics are equivalent to *Śrāmanera* as *upasampadā* is omitted while some others state that they are more than *Śrāmanera* as most of them undertake several other *Buddhist* initiations.

<sup>942</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 519), P. 140

<sup>943</sup> Hazra, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 352), P. 151

<sup>944</sup> Rospatt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 441), P. 207

<sup>945</sup> *Ibid*, P.208

#### 12.1.2.4 Introduction of higher initiation (*dīkṣā*)

The off-springs of *Vajrācāryas* undertake next initiation, *Ācā luyegu* (the making of *vajrācārya* or *Gubhāju*) immediately or a gap of time after receipt of *Pravajyā*. *Ācā luyegu* ensures their right to act as family priest. *Vajrācārya*'s son failing to receive this ordination becomes a *Bare* of the *Śākya* kind. *Ācā luyegu* confers on the novice the right to perform a limited range of *Vajrayāna* rituals, consisting of those routine rites mostly associated with client's life cycle and with purificatory rites. They do not however give the right to perform esoteric *vajrayānic* rituals known as *Guhyā* (secret *Pūjā*) unless *Vajrācārya* take another Initiation, *Dekhā*.<sup>946</sup> Later they (*Śākyas*, *Vajrācāryas* and others like *Tulādhars*) can receive higher initiation, *Dekhā* (entering to esoteric or mystic practice). *Dekhā* is optional and all monastics may not receive it. *Dekhā* is a large scale affairs taking place at irregular and infrequent intervals, carried out by *Gubhāju* of outstanding fame, with his wife as joint initiator. Knowledge of non duality is given by symbolic union of *Prajñā* or wisdom (female) and *upāya* (skillful means or compassion) or method (male) ritualistically to the initiates.

*Bare chuyegu* may be said to constitute a symbolic initiation into monkhood, and *Ācā luyegu* into the profession of family priest, and the *Dekhā* constitutes an initiation into a still narrower circle of *vajrayānic* mystics.<sup>947</sup> In cultural terms, the rites initiate the boys into *Buddhist* traditions in which the three great doctrines of *Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyāna*, and *Vajrayāna* are represented as being increasing high forms and of increasingly greater relevance for the boy and the ceremonies of initiation may be viewed as an encapsulation of the whole history of *Buddhism* amongst the *Newārs*.<sup>948</sup>

#### 12.1.3 Emergence of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya*

It is unique to have emergence and prevalence of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* enthusiasts in *Newār Buddhist* tradition, who always became sincere *Buddhist* practitioners/adherents. As revealed from Indian inscriptions that *Śākyabhikṣu* were the monks under *Mahāyāna* tradition and emerged after 4<sup>th</sup> century, while

<sup>946</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), P. 35

<sup>947</sup> *Ibid*, P.36

<sup>948</sup> *Ibid*, P. 33

*Vajrācāryas* were the *Paṇḍits* among them who qualified themselves attaining higher scholarship before casteism was overlaid.<sup>949</sup> Later, they changed into castes-*Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* respectively. However, *Śākyas* are often considered as the descendants of *Buddha*'s clan. Though it is a popular hear-say, it is less convincing from the view point of scientific proofs like inscriptions. This does not give answer to question 'what lineage should be attributed to those *Śākyas* who denied *Ācāryābhiṣeka* and remained *Śākya* instead of *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* who were promoted to *Vajrācārya* by royal order'. No matter what so ever be the reason behind evolution of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*, they always remained faithful *Buddhist* practitioners who are regarded as venerable monks by their *Buddhist* society and they kept the torch of *Buddhist* monasticism burning in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

#### 12.1.3.1 Casteism

Nepal has distinct *Buddhist* communities which have been converted into castes like *Vajrācārya* and *Śākya* who constituted *Sanḅha* and others like *Udās*, *Chitrakār*, *Ranjitkār*, *Manāndhars*, *Maharjan* etc who formed *upāsaka* and *upāsika* group. Castes were generally ridiculed in *Buddhism* but Nepalese strangely had them now.

Casteism in Nepal is directly linked to policy of Jayasthitimalla's social reforms. However, it is learnt that it was prevalent before his period.<sup>950</sup> It seems that there was liberal attitude among the castes which worked according to religious sentiment before his period. People were free to adopt pantheon of their interest and choice. There were several evidences of joining *Buddhist* community by non *Buddhists* including *Brahmins*. What Jayasthitimalla did is promulgation of law in the name of social reforms in accordance to *Hindu* inclination. The policy was against *Buddhist* norms but *Buddhists* were also somehow affected. Some rules imposed by Jayasthitimalla which affected *Buddhist* monastic tradition in Nepal are as follows<sup>951</sup>- (i) Rituals and occupation to be followed were classified according the castes which were categorized into four *varṇa* and thirty six castes; profession

<sup>949</sup> For details, please refer to earlier Chapter XI. The *Sanḅha*-The Functional unit of Monasticism.

<sup>950</sup> Nayaraj Panta, "Sthiti Malla Tāthā Jātapāta (Sthiti Malla and Casteism)", in Chittaranjan Nepali, Prof. Dineshraj Panta, et. al (Ed.), *Nepalko Itihāsakā Vividha Pakṣa (Different Historical Aspects of Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Rājakiya Pragya-pratisthān, 2058 B.S), Pp. 168-179

<sup>951</sup> Chandra Bikram Budathoki, *Sthiti Mallako Sudhār (Reformation by Sthiti Malla)*, (Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan, 2039 B.S), Pp. 2, 7, &20

of metal works including goldsmith was prescribed for *Bāṇḍā* (*Śākyas*) while *Vajrācāryas* were assigned to work as priest for prescribed *Buddhist* castes (ii) dress attire and ornaments should also be worn according to castes (iii) prohibition of cross occupation, those who adopted occupation of other caste were considered offender and were subject to punishment. The policy discouraged joining *Buddhist* community by the non *Buddhists* while *Hinduism* enjoyed royal favour.

However, the accommodation of the *Saṅgha* to the caste system in Nepal can be comparable with that of Srilanka.<sup>952</sup> And the performance of *Hindu* style rites of passage in the *Kriyāsaṁgraha*, a text which was compiled well before *Buddhism* vanished in India, already prevailed.<sup>953</sup> Therefore, if *Newār* monasticism is to be labeled degenerated form, it seems to have roots already in Indian developments. On the other hand, conversion of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya* into castes has far reaching consequences both in positive and negative way. Regarding positive side, they became perennial ever persistent *Buddhist* practitioners. Till their presence, *Buddhist* monasticism can hardly be challenged in *Nepal-maṇḍala* even in spite of so many shortfalls. As most concerned negative side, *Newār Buddhist* tradition is posed to growing apathy and non cooperation from people of other castes.

It can be envisaged that without sense of identity of *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* as *Buddhist* monks of kinds and without their monasticism, *Newār Buddhism* would have most likely been absorbed into the *Hindu* fold, as it happened in Northern India. For lay castes without a monastic connection *Buddhism* is not firmly anchored and institutionalized enough to guarantee a lasting sense of distinctness from the *Hindu* surrounding. *Newār Buddhism* serves as an example of the fact that the institution of monkhood and monasticism can even without vocational, celibate monks be of such pivotal importance showing how vital it is for the integrity and survival of *Buddhist* societies.<sup>954</sup> Regarding this, *Vajrācārya*, *Śākya*, and also *Udās* possess distinct *Buddhist* identity in Nepal.

#### 12.1.4 Disappearance of *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha*

Several *Lichchavī* inscriptions corroborate presence of *Bhikṣu* and *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* during *Lichchavī* period in Nepal. No doubt, they consisted of celibate monks and

<sup>952</sup> Rospatt, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 519), Pp. 168 -189.

<sup>953</sup> *Ibid*, P.178

<sup>954</sup> *Ibid*, P. 176

nuns respectively. In Chabahil inscription of supposedly fourth century, name of *Ārya Saṅgha Baudha Bhikṣu*<sup>955</sup> was mentioned to which a land was donated by a generous donor. The Handigaon inscription<sup>956</sup> of Amśuvarma (606 -621AD) also mentions the *Ārya Bhikṣu Saṅgha* establishing the continuity of this *Saṅgha* for more than two hundred years. Chapatole inscription<sup>957</sup>, of Lalitpur during the period refers to the *Caturdiśā Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha*. An inscription from *Musum Bāhāl*, Kathmandu also mentions about *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha*<sup>958</sup>. Similarly another inscription from Chyāmhasingha<sup>959</sup>, Bhaktapur tells about presence of *Ārya Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* prevailing in Kathmandu valley.

There is reference of visit of a Nepalese *Bhikṣuṇī*, Pushpā (Me Tong in Tibetan) to Tibet in 1168 A.D.<sup>960</sup> The account of Pushpā shows that Nepalese *Buddhist* monks and nuns were held in high esteem by the Tibetans.

Presence of *Śākyabhikṣuṇī* has been already discussed in the Chapter XI, *Saṅgha—The functional Unit of Monasticism*.<sup>961</sup> As the *Śākyabhikṣus*, there existed *Śākyabhikṣuṇī* who must have been celibate nuns. An inscription of N.S. 398 (1304 A.D) inscribed at the base of *Akṣobya Buddha* image at *Guita Bahi* Lalitpur, mentions about *dāna caryā* (generous deed) of *Bhikṣuṇī Śrī Malayaśrīrova* wishing welfare of *ācārya*, *upādhyāya*, parents and all living beings through the merit earned by her deed.<sup>962</sup> But any kind of *Bhikṣuṇī* tradition died out in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. With the conversion of full fledged celibate monks into householder monks and disappearance of celibate monks, *Bhikṣuṇī Saṅgha* is no more existing. Moreover, wives of the householder monks are considered *Bhikṣuṇī* and honorific address like “*Gurumā*” is made to them. It also sounds justifiable to some extent. They, being the wives of householder monks and daughters of *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* brought up in *Buddhist* environment are mostly well acquainted with *Buddhist* teachings, ethics, and ritualistic procedures and so are found congruent with title. She should also know ritualistic processes of *Buddhism* and should be

<sup>955</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 3

<sup>956</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 320-335.

<sup>957</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 382-383

<sup>958</sup> *Pasukā*, year 2, Vol. 10, Ashad 2055

<sup>959</sup> *Pasukā*, year 2, Vol. 10, Ashad 2055

<sup>960</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 149

<sup>961</sup> Please refer to Chapter XI ‘*Saṅgha- The functional unit of Monasticism*’

<sup>962</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 2), P. 134



able to assist her husband in the pursuit of the religious goal. They along with their spouses, *Śākyas* or *Vajrācārya* represent persistent *Buddhist* monastics. This status is given to the spouses of *Śākyas* and *Vajrācārya*, who are called *Śākyabhikṣuṇī* and *gurumāju* respectively or simply *gurumā* - honorable salutation used for nuns. But, such *gurumā* should be daughters of *Śākya* and *vajrācārya* persons only. If a *Śākya* or *vajrācārya* marries a girl from other caste, she is not socially considered as the *gurumā*.

#### 12.1.5 Exoteric to Esoteric nature or vice versa

*Vajrayāna* is basically esoteric system and *Newār Buddhism* is *Vajrayāna* type. Therefore, esotericism (understood publicly as *Tāntricism*) is the part of their practice which requires special introductory instructions called initiations or *dīkṣā* or *abhiṣeka*. Besides, *Newār* monasticism also has the exoteric *Mahāyāna* devotionism shown to *caityas*, great stupas like *Svayambhū*, celestial *Bodhisattvas* and guardian deities, and exoteric *Śrāvakyāna* practice consisting of adoption of celibate monastic ordination, and other occasional observances like *vrata* requiring celibacy.

It is to be understood that their esoteric practice is merely a preparation for attainment of religious goal.<sup>963</sup> Female gods like *Guheśworī*, *Vajrayoginī*, *Bijeshwori*, and *Hārati* are much more likely to respond to requests for immediate and self interested results.<sup>964</sup> They play an important role in esoteric *tantric* rituals.<sup>965</sup> It seems they were once *Buddhist tantric* deities, sited in monasteries since they do not accept blood sacrifice.

It can be speculated that before establishment of *Vajrayāna*, there must have been total exoteric practices. Still exoteric portions are more evident in the monasteries. Scholars like Gellner gave view that “*Tantricism*, far from being tribal, non Aryan, non- *Saṅskritic* or popular, is an essentially urban, learned, sophisticated, and esoteric movement”. It is based on a learned soteriology.<sup>966</sup> There are separate monasteries for esoteric practice. *Bāhā* having its esoteric chambers like *āgaṃ* and

<sup>963</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 281

<sup>964</sup> *Ibid*, P. 81

<sup>965</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>966</sup> *Ibid*, P. 317

*digi* is for concealed practice while *bahi* is for exoteric practice.<sup>967</sup> But some criticize *Newār* monasticism for keeping its practice secret and praise *Tibetan* type to be more liberal. One should not forget that both *Newār* and *Tibetan Buddhism* have esoteric parts. As pointed out by *Buddhist* scholars, there is a good degree of similarity between *Newār* and *Tibetan Buddhism*.<sup>968</sup> It is true that several *Tibetans* got initiation and teaching from *Buddhist* masters of Nepal. *Tibetan* kept coming to Nepal for learning *Buddhism* and *Nepalese Buddhist* scholars also reached *Tibet* in course of *Dharma* teaching. In fact it is said that *Tibet* received dissemination of *Buddhist* teaching through *Nepalese Buddhists*. But, with the motive of true teaching of the *Vajrayāna* form of *Buddhism* which was deep rooted in *Nepalese Buddhism*, closed system of teachings was adopted. At first, it must have been passed to the interested ones in place of giving free and open teaching. This practice was later confined to particular lineage or groups or castes. *Tibetans* are compelled to divulge some of the teachings and practices after their diaspora from *Tibet*.<sup>969</sup> The saying that *Nepalese Buddhism* drew in much of concealments while *Tibetan Buddhism* has no concealments is not totally true. Presence of several sects of *Tibetan* form of *Buddhism* can be taken as the result of prevalence of concealments among them. Teachings of a particular sect is concealed and confined to that particular sect. But, after Chinese take over of *Tibet* resulting in Diaspora of *Tibetans*, many such concealments were broken and there appeared as no concealment in *Tibetan* tradition.

#### 12.1.6 Change in guiding *Buddhist* sects

In the beginning there was no division among the *Buddhist* practitioners into sects. Later in different time periods, various sects appeared. During Pre-*Lichchavī* and *Lichchavī* period, *Mahāsāṃghikā* remained dominant sect. Another influential sect in *Lichchavī* period was *Sarvāstivāda*. Eventually, all these sects paved way to *Mahāyāna* under which *Vajrayāna* evolved. From the testimony of Hiuen Tsang and I-tsing it appears that in the seventh century AD there existed *Mahāyānist Saṅghas* or groups of *Mahāyānist* monks who were meticulous in their observance of *Vinaya* rules. I-tsing coming to northern India three decades later than Hiuen

---

<sup>967</sup> For other details, please see the Chapter X 'Monastery-the architectural tradition in Monasticism'

<sup>968</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 3

<sup>969</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 2

Tsang, did not notice any outstanding difference in respect of *Vinaya* between the *Mahāyānists* and the *Hinayānists*, who, in his opinion, differed only in the matter of the holy texts they studied and the cult-objects they worshipped.<sup>970</sup> As the adherents of these sects appeared, they simultaneously stayed in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Among them, the prominent sects were labeled broadly as *Śrāvakyāna* and *Mahāyāna*. They even shared and stayed at the same monastery. This was the case not only in Nepal but also in India. Therefore, Edward Conze writes:

The adherents of the *Mahāyāna* and *Hinayāna* both practice the same *Vinaya*, recognize the same five categories of faults, are attached to the same four Truths. Those who worship the Bodhisattvas and who read the *Mahāyāna-sūtras* get the name of *Mahāyānists*; those who do not are *Hinayānists*.<sup>971</sup>

Similar view is expressed by Takakusu- ‘Those who worship the *Bodhisattva* and read the *Mahāyāna sūtras* are called *Mahāyānists* (the great), while those who do not perform these called *Hinayānists* (the small).<sup>972</sup>

Hiuen Tsang’s remark from his Travel account that “some 2000 monks belonging to *Hinayāna* and *Mahāyāna* were residing in Nepal”<sup>973</sup> was often misinterpreted by readers/scholars assuming grossly *Hinayānists* to be *Theravādins* of his time i.e. mid 7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>974</sup> Those *Hinayānists* must be *Sarvāstivādins* instead of being *Theravādins*, as revealed by the study. No convincing evidence could be attributed to *Theravāda* except the word *Hinayāna* or Lesser Vehicle. The scholars like Hirakawa also has such view as he mentions that the term *Hinayāna* was most often applied to the *Sarvāstivādin* school.<sup>975</sup>

*Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Sarvāstivāda*, and *Mahāyāna* were known to have been dominant *Buddhist* sects which marked simultaneous and separate existence in *Nepal-maṇḍala* and had been instrumental in shaping *Buddhist* monasticism before it came to final *Vajrayāna* form of today. Further research is required to ascertain

<sup>970</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10), P. 175.

<sup>971</sup> Conze, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 120), Pp.3-4

<sup>972</sup> J. Takakusu, *A Record of The Buddhist Religion as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695) by I-tsing*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1896), Pp.14-15

<sup>973</sup> David L. Snellgrove, *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, (London: Serindia Publications, 1987), P.370

<sup>974</sup> Ven. Painyà Murti, “A Historical Study of Pariyatti Sikkha in Nepal”, M.A Thesis submitted to Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Bangkok in 2005, P.3

<sup>975</sup> Hirakawa, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 274), P.257

exact influencing types under these sects, as there were several sub-sects. *Mūlasarvāstivāda*, *Mahisāsaka*, *Kasyapiyā*, *Dharmaguptika* etc. were trendy *Sarvāstivādin* sects while *Kaukutika*, *Caitika* (*Caityavādins*), *Ekvyavahārika*, *Lokottaravāda*, *Bahusrutriya*, *Prajñāptivāda* etc. were then prevalent *Mahāsāṃghikā*. However, those sects active in Magadha and Bengāl can be considered as influential ones in *Nepal-maṇḍala* too as the local scholars and the practitioners of these regions were generally exchanged or had connection.

#### 12.1.7 Co-residence among *Hinayānists* and *Mahāyānists*.

Though *Hinayāna* is not an appropriate word to use for *Theravāda*, it is used here as it is mentioned in the source of excerpts. Mention of Hiuen Tsang' statement from his travel account that 'there were some two thousand monks belonging to both *Hinayāna* (Lesser Vehicle) and *Mahāyāna* (Greater vehicle) residing in Nepal'<sup>976</sup> has already occurred above. He did not specifically mention about *Vajrayāna* indicating that esotericism was not then adopted. As it was in practice in India "*the adherents of the Mahāyāna and Hinayāna both practice the same Vinaya, recognize the same five categories of faults, are attached to the same four Truths. Those who worship the Bodhisattvas and who read the Mahāyāna-sūtras get the name of Mahāyānists; those who do not are Hinayānists*".<sup>977</sup> This shows *Hinayānists* and *Mahāyānist* stayed at the same monastery. As already mentioned in earlier chapter, *Hinayānists* were *Sarvāstivādins*. But, it is often mistakenly considered *Theravāda* in Nepal.

The coexistence of *Vinaya* keeping monks with householder monks is also attested for Kāśmir. The *Rājtarangini*, a famous chronicle written by Kalyān in the middle of 12<sup>th</sup> century, records the endowment of a monastery which had half side aside for practicing *Bhikṣus* (*Śikṣācāra*) and one for household ones (*garhashtyo*) together with their wives, children, cattle and property (*sāstriputrapasusri*). Monks who adhered to *Mahāyāna* coexisted, often within the same monastery and sharing the same monastic discipline, with those who did not accept the new *Mahāyāna* scriptures, until they were all destroyed by *Muslim* invaders between eleventh and

<sup>976</sup> Snellgrove, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 973)

<sup>977</sup> (i) Conze, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 120), Pp.3-4

(ii) Takasuku, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 972), P.15

the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>978</sup> The same must have been equally true in Nepal too. In the later Medieval period, almost all changed to *Vajrayāna* pantheon. But, the situation is quite opposite nowadays in Kathmandu valley some old *Mahāyāna* Monasteries can be seen occupied by *Theravāda* monks.<sup>979</sup>

#### 12.1.8 Change in scholasticism

Scholasticism and Monasticism are complimentary to one another. Monks had always remained elite group in the history. Since they renunciate worldly pleasure, they do not have worldly obstacles or hindrance. They indulge fully in study, meditation and other religious activities. For their holy acts and in order to allow them sufficient time in their indulgence in study and spiritual activities, the lay persons provide them necessary services in terms of fund, materials and labour. Therefore, the monks can spend enough time in study, enhance their learning and proficiency in delivering conducive spiritual discourse. Monastic institutions and missions became vehicles for the spread of literate cultures throughout the ancient world and held an important place in promoting charitable causes, building libraries, hospitals, schools and universities. Therefore, role of monasticism in creating literate societies should not be underestimated.

*Newār Buddhist* monasticism also enjoyed high scholastic profundity which rose to peak in Medieval period. This also reflected in rich development of *Buddhist* art and architecture. As a result Nepal turned into cornucopia of *Buddhist* literature. Today, Nepal became the source of *Buddhist Sanskrit* literature which was once supposed to have disappeared from the world. This literary wealth of Nepal was exposed to the outside world by then resident British envoy to Nepal, Brian H. Hodgson. Late *Lichchavī* and Early medieval period witnessed exchange of scholars and their scholarships between Nepal, India and Tibet (China). Several eminent Nepalese *Buddhist* scholars arose in that period. Nepal turned into haven for *Buddhist* intellectual discourses and activities. The kings and patrons encouraged the propagation of *Buddhist* literature as is proved by their affixing signatures to many manuscripts. Mention may be made of the signature of Narendradeva in a copy of the *Prajñāpārāmitā* in *Śrī-vihāra*, of Baladeva in a copy of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikā* and of Śāṅkaradeva in *Aṣṭasāhashrikā Prajñāpārāmitā*

<sup>978</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 513), P. 46

<sup>979</sup> In Bhaktapur.

and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*.<sup>980</sup> But, later with the growing shift towards ritualism, *Buddhist* scholarship declined in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

#### 12.1.9 Scholastic to Ritualistic monasticism

With full adoption of *Vajrayāna Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* in later medieval period, ritualism grew considerably. As a result today, *Buddhism* of *Nepal-maṇḍala* is known as ritualistic *Buddhism*. *Vajrayāna* is full of rituals with philosophy behind them. What had happened here is that in course of time philosophical part was given less importance and ritualistic part was made dominant. Philosophical discernment became concern of only learned *Paṇḍits*'s intellectual proclivity. Furthermore, according to *Vajrayāna Buddhism*, among the four classes of *tantra* (*kriyā*, *caryā* or *upatantra*, *yoga* and *Anuttara yoga*), only former two i.e *kriyā* and *caryā* involving rituals have exoteric nature and so are generally seen from outside while *yoga* and *anuttara yoga* involving much of meditation have esoteric nature and so are seen secret. This also is responsible for labeling *Newār Buddhism* as ritualistic *Buddhism*. Practitioners spent most of the time doing rituals – mindless activity for most of the people. Few of the elder monks seemed to be very learned or even interested in study and meditation. Younger practitioners were involved in studying *Buddhism*, but it was clear that for them this task was a distant second to ritual, the main task of the monastery. The doctrines of the *Kriyā tantra* and the *Caryā tantras* were meant for the beginners for whom mere rituals and practices were prescribed; but the *Yoga tantra* and the *Anuttara yoga tantra* are meant for the advanced *Śādhakas* who would attain perfection (*Siddhi*) through process of *Yoga*. *Buddhism*'s concentration on the essentials of spiritual development has meant that it has been able to co-exist with both other major religions and popular folk traditions which catered for people's desire for a variety of rituals.<sup>981</sup> However, it would not be an exaggeration, if one says *Newār Buddhist* monasticism is survived by the rituals. There are several festivals, occasions when *Buddhist* rituals are elaborately held and that give impression of ritualistic *Buddhism*.

*Buddha* did not forbid worship of the gods, what he said was that for the attainment of true happiness and enlightenment culminating in *Nirvāṇa*, worship of the gods

<sup>980</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 116 ), P. 31

<sup>981</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P. 4

and sacrifice are useless.<sup>982</sup> The gods whose existence and control over natural forces, the *Buddha* did not deny, are bound by the same law of *kamma-saṃsāra* of men. But the gods were not worshipped primarily for enlightenment. There was no real contradiction in their minds between the worship of the gods and their adherence to *Buddhism* and their patronage of the monks. Worship of the gods was in the mind of the followers, mostly uneducated. Worship is the only way for them to influence the forces and events which determined the quality of life here and now. Ceremony and rituals are important for enhancing appeal for the common people. This is why more and more of the common rituals were incorporated in religious heritage of India and Nepal by *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* and integrated into *Buddhist* religious practice. The process is still going on today among the *Newārs*. In the cities where the great *Bāhās* exist, the laity worships the *Buddhist* gods with a round of rituals conducted by the *Bare* which differs little in outward detail from the rituals performed by the *Hindus*, but which is replete with *Buddhist* symbols and with prayers drawn from *Mahāyāna sūtras* and the *Buddhist tantras*. What is peculiar to *Newār Buddhism* is that the *Buddhist* priests have taken over the role of the *Brāhmins* as family priests who perform the life cycle rites. This can be taken as a convincing instance of happening where *Buddhism* flourished in a *Hindu* society.<sup>983</sup> The *Bhikṣus* of India never took up the task in adverse condition. Therefore, *Buddhism* died out in India being cut off from its source of life once the monasteries were destroyed and the *Saṅgha* vanished. But, in Nepal among the *Newārs* the *Bare* carry on the tradition of the monks and monasteries. They maintain the *Buddhist* shrines and tend the deities with a round of ritual that attracts devotees. The *Saṅgha* still exists though the tradition is deteriorating. However, due to the decline of scholarship and minimal use of *Buddhist* meditation among the *Vajrācārya* at large, the process is generally arrested at the level of ritual for its own sake. The *Vajrācāryas* provide the people with liturgy for their life cycle rites and religious devotions which is *Buddhist* and which should serve as an introduction to a deeper understanding and appreciation of *Mahāyāna - Vajrayāna* doctrine.

*Buddhist* rituals are derived out of *Buddhist* scriptures including popular story texts. stemming from the compassionate occupation, expressing devotion to the *Tri-ratna* and asserting their interrelationship; on the authority of the *Buddha*, the

<sup>982</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 62

<sup>983</sup> *Ibid*, P. 64

*Saṅgha* acts to utilize the *Dharma* to create mundane and supramundane blessing; domesticated *Buddhism* across Asia developed many avenues whereby monastic leaders adapted their lineage's resources as a 'Triple Jewels' to remain a compelling refuge.<sup>984</sup>

#### 12.1.10 Prevalence of Priestly function

There are two ways of leading the life of a monk: one entails continuous meditation (*Vipassana-dhura*) and the other part time meditation, studying and teaching the *Dhamma* (*grantha-dhura*). It is obligatory for every *Bhikṣu* to take up one or other of these ways according to temperament, age and environment.<sup>985</sup> But, monastics were found spending so much time in the practice of rituals. They were well informed that they are supposed to study and meditate as prescribed in the canonical discipline. They are involved in ritual practice because of social obligation. The social involvement of the *Bhikṣu* brought him face to face with *Brāhmins* who already dominated over the masses. Monks and nuns' adoption of a priestly function has had important consequences for *Buddhist* monasticism. It has changed the nature of monastic vocation by lessening practitioners distance from the laity. *Buddhism* has been very good at adapting to different cultures while guarding its own somewhat fluid borders by a critical tolerance of other traditions.<sup>986</sup>

The emphasis on world-transcending ideal and an ascetic separation from worldly life does not, however, capture the full reality of *Buddhist* monasticism. Even typically ideal *Buddhist* monks and nuns are not just renouncers who live the homeless life prescribed by the *Vinaya*. They also act as priests of a cult, providing ritual services for lay people in exchange for support. It is difficult to say when this priestly function developed, but clearly it started very early on, perhaps, as Gregory Schopen suggests, even earlier than Aśoka (270 -232 BCE) and developed gradually. It is nothing unnatural or illogical in so being. Ritual is not contradiction to the *Buddhism* but it had been the part and parcel of *Buddhism* from the very beginning. This transformation of *Buddhist* monasticism was greatly encouraged by the institutionalization of the *Buddhist* tradition during Aśoka's rule. The king's

---

<sup>984</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 8-9

<sup>985</sup> Piyadassi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 91), P. 108

<sup>986</sup> Harvey, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 76), P. 4



support transformed *Buddhism*, which had been relatively obscure, into a major tradition that needed to satisfy the religious needs of its followers. This practice is in principle, the province of the laity, and the monastics are supposed to aim for a higher goal. The job of *Saṅgha* members is to strive for their own spiritual development, and use their knowledge and experience of *Dhamma* to guide others, when asked: not to act as an intermediary between God and humankind, or officiate at life cycle rites. Nevertheless, in practice they have come to serve the laity in several priest- like ways.<sup>987</sup> The rituals is the integral part of *Buddhism*. Earlier form of *Buddhism* too has rituals which increased in frequency, propensity and intensity as the as time passed on, first in the various sects of *Sthaviravāda*, then at greater pace with the development of *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*. Rituals proliferated with the development of *Mahāyāna* and occupied a much more central role while *Vajrayāna* evolved. Ritual was prevalent in full swing in the monastic communities by 7<sup>th</sup> century as revealed by the references from travel account of Itsing, the great Chinese traveler who witnessed various ritual performances at Nālandā *Buddhist* University of Bihāra during his visit to India in 671 – 695 A.D.<sup>988</sup> Thus, he concludes that rituals have roots in the monastic rituals followed in ancient monasteries like Nālandā. Rituals gave the *Buddhist* followers the means to live *Buddhist* way of life. The ritual enjoined by the local custom in the process of time gave cultural flavour and the *Buddhist* teaching did not remain as mere philosophy. *Mahāyāna Buddhism* adapted itself to the customs and habit of the ordinary people to draw them to the *Buddha*'s teachings. Rituals later virtually superseded the *sūtras*, as the doctrine is to be acted out in tangible form, not simply understood mentally. And consequently, the ritual becomes more and more elaborate.

This priestly function is not to be confused with another monastic task, that of allowing laypeople to gain merit. The practice of accumulating merit, an integral part of the *Buddhist* soteriological project, is sometimes misrepresented as not being fully soteriological.

*Buddhists'* life style has been to offer invitations to several levels of spiritual practice for those who have been ready to commit themselves. In southern *Buddhist* lands, worship of pre-*Buddhist* nature gods has continued in South-east

---

<sup>987</sup> *Ibid*, P. 217

<sup>988</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), Pp. 67-69

Asia, while, in Sri Lanka, *Buddhists* often worship gods whose cults are indigenous or Indian in origin. Most *Buddhists* would not see this as a betrayal of *Buddhism*, but, just an attempt to interact with minor powers of the cosmos for worldly advantage. In Northern *Buddhism*, a similar relationship exists with the indigenous Bon religion of Tibet. *Buddhism* has been practiced as a religion by its followers and rituals were developed out of devotion, though it has the philosophy that rituals are worldly means of practice and are futile from the perspective of attaining final goal. In Nepal, *Vajrācāryas* are the main performers of such rituals. *Vajrayāna* of Nepal is viewed as the *Buddhism* of *Vajrācāryas*.<sup>989</sup> It is divulged that rites and rituals performed by *Vajrācāryas* in Nepal were developed in India in the great monasteries such as Nālandā and Vikramśīla from eighth century onwards. The ritual worship performed by the *Vajrācārya* and by their laity is all part of the common heritage of *Vajrayāna -Tantric Buddhism* developed and practiced in the great monastic universities of India from the seventh century until the disappearance of *Buddhism* in India.<sup>990</sup> Furthermore, the *Tibetan* and certain *Japanese Buddhist* sects, notably the Shingon sect, still perform the same rites and rituals. In that case, how could one say that rituals of *Vajrācāryas* are the copies of *Hindu* rituals. On one hand it signifies the uniqueness of *Nepalese Buddhism* while on the other hand, it indicates limitation.

#### 12.1.11 Involvement of Monks in Life cycle rites

It is often felt ridiculous and controversial when monks are found doing rituals for the lay-followers especially in life cycle rites. More than once recently it has again been suggested that *Buddhist* monks had little or no role in life-cycle ceremonies in early India.<sup>991</sup> It is not known on what evidence these suggestions are based. In fact, *Buddhist Vinaya* texts in *Pāli*, *Saṅskrit*, and “*Prakrit-cum-Saṅskrit*” seem to suggest quite otherwise. They seem to suggest and assume that monks regularly had a role in such ceremonies and that their ritual presence and performance at such ceremonies was of some importance. So, the *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* are often criticized for conducting lifecycle rituals. But, it is learnt from the text

---

<sup>989</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 67-71

<sup>990</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74

<sup>991</sup> Bechert and Gombrich, ed., *Op.cit.* (f.n. 412), P. 14

R. Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism. A Social history from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (London: 1988), P. 124.

*Abhisamayacārikā*- the *Prakit-cum Saṅskrit* text of *Mahāsāṃghikā* mentioned about active participation of monks in domestic lifecycle rituals. The text showed that the monks were often invited to perform lifecycle rituals.<sup>992</sup> *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya vastu* of *Sarvāstivāda* also attests such performance by the monks.<sup>993</sup> The *Mūla Sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* like the *Vinaya* of the *Theravāda*, then assumes and requires the presence of monks at certain lay domestic life cycle ceremonies.<sup>994</sup> Elsewhere in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya*, having about 4000 folios and 13 volumes, it is made clear that monks had a series of ritual obligations in regard to lay brothers and lay-sisters (*upāsaka/upāsikā*). What our text seems to be suggesting is that lay bothers and lay sisters might, in turn, have certain ritual privileges in regard to monks.<sup>995</sup>

#### 12.1.12 *Tri-ratna* (Triple gems) in place of *Catur-ratna* (Tetra Gems)

In the Nepalese monastic tradition, *Buddha* is envisioned as *Ādi-guru*, *Dharma* as way to *Nirvāṇa* and *Saṅgha* as the representation of the *Buddha*. *Guru* has the supreme position. Therefore, the monastics always follow *guru-maṇḍala* rite in every religious performance. *Guru-maṇḍala* encapsulates ritualistically refuge to triple gems and highlights the role of the *guru*. For this reason, the stanza '*Guru-Buddha, guru-Dharma, guru-Saṅgha tathaivaca, guru vajradharascaiva tasmai Śrī guruve nama*' (meaning salutation to *guru* as *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha* as well as *guru* as *Vajradhara*) is very popular in Nepal. The *Guru-maṇḍala* ritual is significant in *Newār Buddhism*. This rite is the first ritual performed by a *Vajrācārya* at the beginning of every *pūjā* for purification of oneself, his *jajamān* (parishioner) and the surrounding area. This performance may be equated in meaning to that of *Theravādins* taking *pañcaśīla* (promises of morality), and also to that of *Hindus* giving the gift of cow before undertaking any good work.<sup>996</sup> The *Guru-maṇḍala* can be described also as the veneration and offering made to the *Guru*, the Teacher, (the triple gems-*Guru Buddha, Guru Dharma* and *Guru Saṅgha*) who is represented by *Vajrasattva*. The deity being worshipped is also considered to be the *Vajrācārya*'s *Guru*. The *maṇḍalā* in question is the Mt. Meru

<sup>992</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181i), P. 78

<sup>993</sup> *Ibid*, P. 76.

<sup>994</sup> *Ibid*,

<sup>995</sup> *Ibid*, P. 98

<sup>996</sup> Locke, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 108), P. 83

*maṇḍala* which is offered ritualistically to the *Guru*.<sup>997</sup> The most remarkable point in *Guru-maṇḍala* ritual performance is repeated offering of parched rice and unbroken rice to the accompaniment of the popular *Buddhist* motto ‘*Ye dharmā hetu prabhavā*’ recitation<sup>998</sup>. All *Buddhist* sects, *Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna Buddhists* alike have at least accepted this formula as a summation of the *Buddha*’s teachings and have used it as a motto or slogan. Custom of performing *Guru-maṇḍala* in Nepal also justifies the saying that instead of concept of *Tri-ratna* (triple gems), *Catu-ratna* (Quadri gems) concept prevailed in *Nepalese Buddhism*, as pointed out by Rajendra Ram<sup>999</sup>, the fourth gem being the *Guru*.

Everyday lifestyle of monastics is governed by *Dharma* and *Buddhist* philosophical principles. According to Rajendra Ram the concept of *Catur-ratna* (Tetra jewel) was introduced by Sarāhapāda, in *Mahāyāna Buddhism* of Nepal. Thus, four jewels of *Catur-ratna* are *Guru*, *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha*. Other forms of *Buddhism* have only *Tri-ratna* concept (refuge to be taken in *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Saṅgha*). Now, at present *Catur-ratna* is less known, and *Tri-ratna* is popular as with other *Buddhist* traditions.

### 12.1.13 Change in Monastic code

It would be relevant to analyze nature of *Vinaya* code. Rules of monasticism is guided by philosophy but not by *Vinaya* which is secondary only.<sup>1000</sup> The *Vinaya* texts that we know are little interested in any individual religious quest but are concerned with the organization, administration, maintenance, and smooth operation of a complex institution that owned property and had important social obligations.<sup>1001</sup> In the history of *Buddhism*, the dissent of the *Mahāsāṃghikās* from the *Theravādin*’s strict and literal interpretation of the *Vinaya* may be traced from the very inception of that dissident school- from the *Mahābheda* itself. The *Lokottaravādins* among them, were not particular about inserting the regula in their *Vinaya* work. On the authority of Paramartha that a sect called *Kaulikas* held the

<sup>997</sup> *Ibid*, P. 87

<sup>998</sup> Full form ‘*ye dharmā hetu prabhavā hetu te sām tathāgato hyuvadatah, tesām ca yo nirodha avamvādi Mahāśramaṇa*’ meaning – “Whatever phenomena are produced by a cause, the *tathāgata* revealed the cause of those. The cessation of those, too, the great *śramaṇa* has revealed”

<sup>999</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 54

<sup>1000</sup> Elder, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 92), P. 29

<sup>1001</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 93

extreme view that the real teachings of the *Buddha* were not the *Vinaya*, but *Abhidharma* (philosophy), and that ‘a *Bhikṣu* may or may not have three robes for covering his body; may or may not reside in a monastery; and may or may not take his meal within the time limit. This sect is mentioned by Vasumitra as a *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect.<sup>1002</sup> Some scholars believe that the *Mahāsāṃghikā* school was the nidus of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*. *Mahāyānist* works like *Surangāmā Sūtra*<sup>1003</sup>, *Upāli-pariprcchā*, *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, etc. contemplate *Vinaya* as cultivation of certain attitudes of mind and qualities of heart rather than as observance of a set of rules. Yet even if the *Mahāyānists* regarded it more as mental and moral discipline than a system of rules and regulations, they did not go so far as to discard the rules-only they did not recognize them as ‘categorical imperatives’.<sup>1004</sup> However, *Buddhist* monasticism is ruled by its own set of certain laws. The *Vinaya* (the part of the canon concerned with monastic discipline) is more a legal code than a compendium of spiritual advice. Because it codifies the laws of a community rather than guides individuals, it deals only with external behaviours, not with internal mental states.

The great Belgian scholar Etienne Lamotte declared in 1958, that *Vinaya* code like *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* which was considered as a source of information of the first or second century of our era, was late and that “one can not attribute to this work a date earlier than the 4<sup>th</sup> -5<sup>th</sup> centuries of Christian Era.<sup>1005</sup> It was not only *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya Vastu*, he also noticed by 1966, parallel development of various *Vinaya* texts like those of *Pāli*, *Mahāsāṃghikā*, *Mūlasarvāstivāda*, and *Dharmaguptika*. Sylvian Levi also held the view that then *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* which is an immense pot pourri of *Buddhist* disciplines for Kusāna to 5<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, becomes a primary source. There is an almost general agreement that the *Vinaya* formation is late and was redacted and used during this period.<sup>1006</sup> In most cases, the *Vinaya* has been securely placed in time: the *Sarvāstivāda-Vinaya* that we know was translated into Chinese at the beginning of fifth century (404-405 CE). So were the *Vinayas* of the *Dharmaguptikas* (408 CE), the

<sup>1002</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 10), P. 174.

<sup>1003</sup> *Surangāmā sūtra* translated into Chinese by Paramartha in 705, now not available in *Sanskrit* original is a great *Mahāyāna sūtra* held in great esteem in China.

<sup>1004</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n.10), P. 175.

<sup>1005</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 20

<sup>1006</sup> *Ibid*, Pp. 2-3

*Mahisāsakas* (423-424 CE), and the *Mahāsāṃghikas* (416 CE).<sup>1007</sup> The *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* was translated into both Chinese and Tibetan still later, and the actual contents of the *Pāli Vinaya* are only knowable from Buddhaghosa's fifth century commentaries. We do not know anything definite about any hypothetical earlier versions of these *Vinayas*. *Vinaya* took its present textual form much after the beginning of the Christian era and that these texts (*Vinayas*) though they refer to many incidents contemporary with the *Buddha* himself, reflect the thinking of a much later time, the time of their redaction.<sup>1008</sup>

This was, after all, the period during which equally enormous doctrinal encyclopaedias like the *Abhidharmakośa* were also compiled; this was the period during which the various named monastic orders- the *Sarvāstivādins*, *Mahāsāṃghikas*, *Dharmaguptikas*, and so on appeared in Indian inscriptions as the recipients of what must have been an enormous amount of surplus wealth.<sup>1009</sup>

So, remarkable similarities can be discerned in the outlines of these *Vinayas*. The *Buddhist* communities did not live in complete isolation but were interested in the work carried out by their neighbours. It is therefore not surprising that they worked with the same methods and followed practically them and followed practically the same plan. If nothing is more like one *Buddhist vihāra* than another *Buddhist vihāra*, it is normal that the various known *vihāras* should reveal the close link which connected them.<sup>1010</sup> Lamotte's last sentence would seem to suggest that the various *Vinayas* are alike because they all reflect the existence of a uniform, standardized, and well organized *vihāra*.<sup>1011</sup> In *Nepal-maṇḍala* also, *Vinaya* followed in neighbouring Indian regions were being followed as it can be assumed by cross regional migration of *Buddhist* practitioners and use of the common *Buddhist* literature and presence of main-stream celibate *Bhikṣus* and *Bhikṣuṇīs* at that time. Though the practicing *Buddhist* sects might have been different, their *Vinayas* are more or less similar as pointed out by Scholar Lamotte.<sup>1012</sup> From the testimony of Hiuen tsang and It-sing it appears that in the seventh century AD

---

<sup>1007</sup> *Ibid*, P. 95

<sup>1008</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181i), P. 33

<sup>1009</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 95

<sup>1010</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74

<sup>1011</sup> *Ibid*, P. 74

<sup>1012</sup> Influential presence of *Mahāsāṃghika* and *Sarvāstivāda* has been already discussed in the Chapter VIII 'Sectarian Influences'. Please refer to the chapter for details.

there existed *Mahāyānist Saṅghas* or groups of *Mahāyānist* monks who were meticulous in their observance of *Vinaya* rules. It-sing coming to northern India three decades later than Hiuen Tsang, did not notice any outstanding difference in respect of *Vinaya* between the *Mahāyānists* and the *Hinayānists*, who, in his opinion, differed only in the matter of the holy texts they studied and the cult-objects they worshipped.<sup>1013</sup> Actually, *Mahāyānists* never felt need of promulgation of their *vinaya*. They simply adopted *vinaya* already formed by other sources like *Mahāsāṅghika* or *Sarvāstivāda* or *Dharmaguptika* etc. This (observance of *Vinaya* rules) continued till early Medieval period before the collapse of *Buddhism* in India due to *Muslim* invasion. After this, clear-cut *Vinaya* rules were given less importance. Clearly there is something curiously missing here and early history of *Buddhist* monasticism and *Buddhist* monasteries in Nepal must be traced and examined. Both *Buddhist* monasticism and *Buddhist* monasteries had histories that both developed and changed over time. With the conversion of celibate monks into house holder monks and with the omission of *Upasampadāvidhi* monks were exempted from following *Vinaya* sincerely. This resulted in disappearance of bulky *Vinaya* texts and acceptance of importance of *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* texts which fulfilled *Vinaya* rules in the form of moral lessons they contained for the lay-followers and ideal *Vinaya* for the *Buddhist* practitioners in the forms of roles and the actions displayed by the main character, the *Bodhisattva*. This is the *Sarvāstivādin* way of familiarizing the *Vinaya* rules through *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* stories which are popular in Nepal. For the very purpose many *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* stories were domesticated into Nepalese version.<sup>1014</sup> Furthermore, popular texts like *Bodhicaryāvatāra* and *Śiccā Sumuccaya* also played role of *Vinaya* texts for *Buddhist* practitioners in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is a work by Śāntideva extant in original *Saṅskrit*, describing all compassionate mind which a *Bodhisattva* must cultivate and the attributes of such a mind. He calls this the 'Vinaya of a *Bodhisattva*.'<sup>1015</sup> *Bodhicaryāvatāra* is a popular text in Nepal and it is often recited and followed by *Newār Buddhists*.

<sup>1013</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.*(f.n. 10), P. 175.

<sup>1014</sup> See Influence of *Sarvāstivāda* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* in the Chapter VIII, Sectarian Influences

<sup>1015</sup> Śāntideva and *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, Part IV, sec. 5, P. 287

#### 12.1.14 Hierarchy of traditions

*Newār* monastic traditions incorporated all three major vehicles (*Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*) in hierarchical order. The initiated passes through successively higher forms of *Buddhism*. Starting as a totally uninitiated boy, he is first initiated as a house holder (*upāsaka*), i.e. a *Buddhist* layman. Then he becomes a *Śrāvakyāna* monk through the *Pravajyā*. *Bare chuyegu*, a local term for *Pravajyā* constitutes a symbolic initiation into monkhood. With the “laying aside of the robes” he embraces the *Mahāyāna* stage, and, after then he pursue *Vajrayāna* receiving even higher initiations (*abhiṣeka*). If he is a *Vajrācārya*, he will be further initiated into *ācāryahood* after *pravajyā* through *Ācāryābhiṣeka* to be acquainted with the mysteries of the *Vajrayāna*. In other words, to be an adult member of the *Newār Saṅgha*, one must undergo first (in local parlance) *Śrāvaka* styled celibate ordination (usually taking four days) and then *Mahāyāna*-styled initiation into the *Bodhisattva Saṅgha*. Like married Tibetan *Lāmās* of *Nyingmāpā* order, the *Vajrācārya* priests serve the community ritual needs in *Vajrāyāna* style with some specializing in textual study, medicine, astrology, medicine, and meditation.<sup>1016</sup> The complete pattern of Monastic Initiation followed seems as an encapsulation of the whole history of *Buddhism* amongst the *Newārs*.<sup>1017</sup> As a matter of historical fact the types of *Buddhism* represented by the three ways did arise in that order. It may be due to the fact this structure is built into the rite of Monastic Initiation in which the neophyte passed from being a monk to becoming a householder.<sup>1018</sup>

Thus, the *Newār Buddhists* themselves detect in their own *Buddhism* strands from the pre-*Mahāyāna* “Path of the Listeners” (*Śrāvakyāna*), the “Path of the *Bodhisattva*” (*Mahāyāna*) and the “Adamantine Thunderbolt Path” (*Vajrayāna* or *Tantric Buddhism*). Therefore, *Newār Buddhist* practitioners do not attach themselves to a particular *Buddhist* sect. Their practice and monasticism involve all the three forms of *Buddhist* practice in graded way from *Śrāvakyāna* to *Mahāyāna* and then to *Vajrayāna*. As they spend their rest of life being householder monks conducting various religious practice inspired by *Vajrayāna*, they are called

<sup>1016</sup> William M. Johnson, Claire Renkin, *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000), Pp. 707 -708

<sup>1017</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37),

<sup>1018</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 513), P. 120



*Vajrayānists*. Emic hierarchy of tradition<sup>1019</sup> was articulated by the *Newār* initiated elite: *Śrāvakyāna*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna* in ascending way, as these are displayed in the ordering of monastic architecture, community life cycle rites, the *Buddhist* accommodation of caste, and the ritual and ideological legitimation of a householder *San̄gha* that has been delimited by hereditary lineage with the surnames *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya*. The architecture of the *Newār Buddhist* monastery has three shrines, among which one is dedicated to *Śākyamuni Buddha*, often flanked by *Sāriputta* and *Moudgalyāna* concerning *Śrāvakyāna*, second one to the *Bodhisattva* like *Amoghapāsa Lokeśwara*, *Tārā*, and other *Mahāyānist* deities concerning *Mahāyāna* and the third one, *tantric* shrine, to the esoteric deities like ‘*Vajrasattva* or *Vajradhara*’ concerning *Vajrayāna*. In addition there are frequently symbols which may be given a diamond way interpretation and the struts often display many armed *tantric* forms of the Five *Buddhas* or the five protective deities. This also reflects the same hierarchy. Furthermore, this structure of three ways is built into *Newār* rituals and in particular to the sequence whereby a young *Vajrācārya* passes first through monastic initiation, then becomes a householder, and finally undergoes the consecration of a *vajra* master. On the traditional *Newār Buddhist* view, then all three ways were taught by the *Buddha*; the difference between them are explained by the fact that the *Buddha* adapted his message to the capacities and needs of his listeners.

In fact, it is a way in which *Śrāvakyāna* activity has been put in a *Mahāyāna* framework in a typical *Newārī Buddhist* style. It is due to the hierarchy of the three ways present in *Newār* monastic tradition *Newār Buddhists* tend to be extraordinarily flexible. It allows *Newār Buddhists* to locate themselves in relation to the *Theravāda*, and *Tibetan Buddhism* to explain how their tradition is both a continuation of theirs.

#### 12.1.15 Possession of private property

It is rightly mentioned that *Buddhist* monasticism is not just about forms of Christian service, involving the daily round of prayer and contemplation by those who lived within the cloister. Religious houses were also corporations which

---

<sup>1019</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), Pp. 108-114, 335

owned land, administered estates, and enjoyed rights and privileges which needed ratifying and defending.<sup>1020</sup>

*Buddhist* monasticism in earlier time did not favour possession of property by the monastics. Monks were peripatetic wandering from places to places collecting food alms upon which they were dependent. Then there prevailed situation when monks had to manage their daily need of foodings. Therefore, they began accepting from the donors cash money, goods and even land and buildings. Several Indian and Nepalese inscriptions shed light on such affairs. This made remarkable change in *Saṅgha* monastic activities.<sup>1021</sup> Since the monks of *Newār* monasticism are house holder, they keep private property. But, the monks are often criticized for it. Though the *Saṅgha* members are renunciated group who abandoned private property, they were seen holding property. Marshall explained the observable change to have occurred in the *Buddhist* monasticism when tendency grew to substitute the nomadic wandering monastic life with regular settled monasticism and to relax its rules pertaining to strict asceticism and the possession of property.<sup>1022</sup> Settled monasticism is the first step towards possession of private property by the *Saṅgha*. The norm here, the ideal, is not of ascetic practice but of sedentary, socially engaged permanently housed monasticism. This same norm is equally evident elsewhere as well.<sup>1023</sup>

A great deal of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* takes for granted that the monks it was meant to govern had and were expected-even required- to have personal property and private wealth. If *Buddhist* monks were ever required to renounce private property- and there are good reasons for doubting this-they certainly were not by the time the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya* was redacted. Some *Mūlasarvāstivādin* monks, those who were “well known and of great merit” were even expected to be quite wealthy. Rather than suggest that such wealth should be renounced or avoided, this *Vinaya* redacted detailed rule to transmit that wealth to other monks or to shelter it from the state.<sup>1024</sup>

---

<sup>1020</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181), P. 194

<sup>1021</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 4

<sup>1022</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 80

<sup>1023</sup> *Ibid*, P. 92

<sup>1024</sup> *Ibid*, P. 5.

### 12.1.16 Shifting of public story telling practice to *Gyānmālā bhajan* singing

Public story telling was a common practice in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, which attract laity to the *Dharma*. Many *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* play a role of folklorist, telling publicly stories of *Jātakas* and *Avadāna* inculcating *Buddhist* moral lessons. Likewise, laity and the monastics also used *Gyānmālā bhajan* (religious singing) with tenets of *Buddhist* teachings. *Buddhist* stories are contained in such *bhajans* which are sung in lyrical way with music at the religious shrines on occasions and festival time and also on regular basis especially in the mornings and evening. *Buddhist* shrines and monasteries are seen resonating with *bhajans*. With the growing popularity of *Gyānmālā Bhajan*, public story telling practice of the monastics is diminishing and are being displaced. It has become a means of showing devotion to the *Buddha*. The practice is gaining public support as non monastics *Buddhists* can also play role and singing with music is often eye catching and charming. There are separate groups of people consisting of monastics and laity, engaged in *Gyānmālā bhajans* which have become effective way in bonding laity to the *dharma*.

## 12.2 The Major *Buddhist* texts responsible for bringing about the changes in *Newār Monasticism*

It has been already mentioned above that Nepal is the storehouse of *Buddhist Saṅskrit* literature while Srilanka turned to be the source of *Pāli Buddhist* literature. Both these *Saṅskrit* and *Pāli Buddhist* literature are important for knowing *Buddhism*. Supporting the view of Burnouf, who died in 1852 and whom he calls “the brilliant founder of the study of *Buddhism*,” de Jong<sup>1025</sup>, himself the most recent historian of *Buddhist* studies, says: “Bournouf stressed the fact that Indian *Buddhism* had to be studied on the basis of the *Saṅskrit* texts from Nepal and the *Pāli* texts from Ceylon. Burnouf was well aware of the fundamental importance of the study of texts for the history of *Buddhism*. His idea with regard to India at the time of the *Buddha*, the doctrine of the *Buddha* and its later development, the relation of *Buddhism* to caste, etc., are all based on a careful study of the texts.”

---

<sup>1025</sup> J.W. de Jong, “The Study of *Buddhism*: Problems and Perspectives,” *Studies in Indo-Asian Art and Culture*, Vol. IV, ed. Perala Ratnam, (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1975), Pp. 7-30

Each prevalent vehicle of *Buddhism* (*Theravāda*, *Mahāyāna* and *Vajrayāna*) has produced a rich literature. Undoubtedly, this literature is the most important source of knowledge on *Buddhism*. *Buddhist* artefacts, inscriptions, and coins have supplied us with useful data, but generally they can not be fully understood without the support given by the texts. Consequently, the study of *Buddhism* needs first of all to be concentrated on the texts...”.<sup>1026</sup>

de Jong also puts forth another important statement as under.

Missionaries came into contact with *Theravāda Buddhism* of Ceylon, Burma, Siam, and Indonesia and with different forms of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in China and Japan. Their knowledge was based upon what they observed, and on discussions with *Buddhist* priests, but very rarely on the study of *Buddhist* literature itself. For these reasons it must have been very difficult to gain a clear notion of the main *Buddhist* ideas. A religion like *Buddhism* which is based upon principles which are very different from the guiding principles of Christianity cannot be understood without a thorough study of its scriptures.<sup>1027</sup>

*Buddhism* is based on texts, so it can be correctly understood only by a study of its scriptures. The implicit judgment, of course, is that the real *Buddhism* is textual *Buddhism*. It is obvious that “*Buddhist* ideas”- at least correct *Buddhist* ideas- apparently do not reside in what *Buddhists* actually did or in what their “priests” said in conversation.<sup>1028</sup> Therefore, it is understandable that knowledge based on observation of actual behavior is not adequate to know *Buddhism* like *Newār Buddhism* and its monasticism.

Nepal has been the cornucopia of vast number of *Buddhist Sanskrit* texts, most of which were supposed once lost from the globe. Brian H. Hodgson noticed it and revealed this treasure to outside world. One of the unique features of *Newār Buddhism* is about treating the *Buddhist* manuscript. Nepalese not only read, recite and make copies on occasions in pursuit of religious activities but also worship the texts with aromatic powders, unguents, pastes etc.<sup>1029</sup> Most interestingly, they carry the text in procession exhibiting behavior which seems silly to the outsiders and implies a very different conception of the nature and function of sacred texts in

---

<sup>1026</sup> *Ibid*, P. 14

<sup>1027</sup> J. W. de Jong, *A Brief History of Buddhist Studies in Europe and America*, (Tokyo: Koosei Publishing Company, 1997), P. 11

<sup>1028</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181i), P. 9.

<sup>1029</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Foreword of Gregory Scophen, Pp. ix-xi

culture, but is characteristic of South Asia. What *Newārs* are doing to the sacred text is the old practice recommended in the text to be done. The *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* has several long passages directing both monks and laymen to worship books detailing its great value. Nepal is the first Country to reveal the wealth of *Buddhist Saṅskrit Mahāyāna* texts and to make continuous supply of the same. Important *Buddhist* texts like *Aṣṭa Sāharshrikā Prajñāpārāmitā*, *Lalitvistara*, *Avadānasataka*, *Śikṣāsamuccaya* and so forth are solely based on manuscripts received from Nepal. It gives clear indication that these *Saṅskrit* texts must have some sort of bearing directly or indirectly with *Newār Buddhism*. Nevertheless, some texts are considered to have direct impact on *Newār Buddhism* and these can be held responsible for shaping *Newār* monasticism by bringing about the changes. The important *Saṅskrit* scriptures which have been responsible to bring about remarkable changes in *Newār Buddhist* monasticism can be enumerated as follows.

### 1. *Navagrantha*

Among *Buddhist Saṅskrit* scriptures 'Nine Scriptures' stand prominent and authentic *Buddhist* scriptures which give us the teachings on *Bodhisattva* practice. They are as follows:

1. *Ārya Aṣṭa Sāhasrikā Prajñāpārāmitā*<sup>1030</sup>
2. *Ārya Saddharma Puṇḍarika Sūtra*
3. *Ārya Suvarṇa Prabhāsa Sūtra*
4. *Ārya Samādhi Rāja Sūtra*
5. *Ārya Gaṇḍavyūha Sūtra*
6. *Ārya Lankāvatāra Sūtra*
7. *Ārya Daśa Bhūmiśvara Sūtra*
8. *Ārya Lalitavistara Sūtra*
9. *Ārya Tathāgataguhyak Sūtra*

These nine scriptures are regarded as holy *Buddhist* canon of *Newār Buddhism*, equivalent to *Tripitaka*. Practice of studying and recitation of these *Nava vyākaran* scriptures had already begun in *Lichchavī* time.<sup>1031</sup>

### 2. *Kriyā samuccaya*- Jagdarpanacarya

<sup>1030</sup> There are several recensions of *Prajñāpārāmitā* like *PrajñāpārāmitāHṛidaya Sūtra*, *Vajrachhedika Prajñāpārāmitā*, *PancavimsatiPrajñāpārāmitā*, *Satasāhasrikā Prajñāpārāmitā*, *EkvimsatiPrajñāpārāmitā* etc.

<sup>1031</sup> Bajracharya, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 17), P. 388

3. *Kriyā Saṁgraha- Ācārya Kuladatta*
4. *Śikṣā samuccaya- Śāntideva*
5. *Gūṇakārandavyūha*
6. *Avadāna sataka*

*Avadāna Sataka* is mentioned as *Sarvāstivāda* literature.<sup>1032</sup> Within *Avadāna* literature, the following *Avadānas* are also popular in addition to *Avadāna Sataka* :

- (i) *Divyāvadāna*
- (ii) *Bhadra Kalpāvadāna*
- (iii) *Mahāvastu Avadāna*
- (iv) *Vicitra Karnikā Avadāna*
- (v) *Avadāna Kalpalatā* and others

7. *Nāmasaṅgiti*
8. *Svayambhū purāṇa*
9. *Bodhicaryāvatāra*
10. *Advayavajra Saṁgraha (Kudristinirdhātana )*
11. *Ādikarmapradip – Anupam Vajra*
12. *Bodhipath pradip*
13. *Caryāsamgrahapradip*
14. *Pañcaraksā*
15. *Tantra texts like Hevajra*
16. *Manjuśrī Mūlakalpa*

Among above scriptures *Svayambhū purāṇa* and *Gūṇakāraḍavyūha sūtra* are believed to be indigenous to Nepal. Impact of *Svayambhū purāṇa* is obvious on the monasticism of Nepalese *Buddhism*. Most of the Nepalese monastic tradition had linkage with *Svayambhū purāṇa*. It would not be exaggeration to say that Nepalese monasticism revolves around *Swayambhupurana*.

It is to be noted that the tradition of copying the manuscripts was very popular in various *Bāhā* and *Bahī* of Kathmandu Valley. This fact is supported by various colophons found in the end of the manuscripts. Unfortunately, this tradition has dwindled much in modern days.

<sup>1032</sup> (i) Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 181), P. 33.

(ii) Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 105

Among *Tantric Buddhist* literatures, texts like *Guhyasamāja*, *Manjushri Mūlakalpa*, *Gyānodaya*, *Samvarodaya*, *Karavira*, *Yogamvara*, *Niṣpanna Yogāvali*, *Vajrāvali*, *Vajravarāhi*, *Durgati Parīśodhana Tantra*, *Hevajra*, *Cakrasamvara tantra*, *Kālacakra tantra* have paramount importance in *Newār Buddhist* literature. According to these *Tantric* texts, the various celebrations such as *Cakrapūjā*, *Ahorātra*, *Dikṣā Vidhāna* etc are being performed from time to time. They, sometimes, held *Chatrisamvara* (36 *Samvara Pūjā*), *Kiraṇa Dekhā* as the important *Tantric* practices. Furthermore, they draw the various deities of the *Maṇḍala* with sand powder, colour powder, dance with *Caryāgita* together with various musical instruments. They perform *samādhi* and *Yoga* and various stages of development and completion of the practices of various tutelary deities.

The *Vajrayāna* tradition was further enhanced and strengthened by the eighty four *Mahā Siddhās* who contributed numerous *Caryāgita*, *Sādhana*s, rituals and other related works in the *Lichchavī* period (400-880 A. D.), incorporation of which in *Newār Buddhist* tradition gave a way to changes in monastic practices in *Nepal-maṇḍala*.

There are some early *Mahāyāna* scriptures like *Ugra paripekchcha*, *Upālipariprechcha*, *Vimalkīrtinirdeśa sūtra*, *Surangāmā sūtra* etc which no more exist in *Sanskrit* original and almost unknown to Nepalese readers. They are now available in other sources in translated forms in Chinese, and *Tibetan*. They are known to have profound and deciding impact in Nepalese monastic tradition as revealed by the monastic customs prevalent in Nepal.

### 12.3 Factors responsible for bringing about major changes

Besides, the contemporary *Buddhist* manuscripts, texts playing influential impact in bringing about major changes, the other factors which are responsible for such changes are as follows.

#### 12.3.1 State patronage:

The history has it that celibate monasticism under *Buddhism* flourished to full extent when there was royal or state patronage in its support. In India it progressed during the time of Emperor Aśoka (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC), King Kaniṣka (78- 101 AD), King Harshavardhana (7<sup>th</sup> century), *Pālā* and *Sena*

rulers (8th to 13th century) who provided royal patronage to *Buddhism*. In Nepal, it was the case during the period of *Lichchavi* king Vrsdeva (3<sup>rd</sup> century), Amśuvarma and Śivadeva (6<sup>th</sup> century), Narendradeva (7<sup>th</sup> century), *Malla* king Srinivasmalla, Pratapmalla, Siddhinarsinghmalla (17<sup>th</sup> to 18 century) etc. In the lack of such patronage or wealthy generous donors, it became difficult for the monks to survive. Because of lack of support from *Hindu* rulers of Nepal celibate monastic tradition could have gone to extinction. Monks were compelled to do something to live. Daily practice of publicly alm-begging virtually ceased to exist in Nepal. Condition of sole dependence upon alms and donation declined. Situation brought them to be engaged in some sort of blameless noble jobs like astrologers, medical healers, craftsmen, artisans etc to earn their livelihood. So, *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas* though they are socially ranked as monks, are working persons in the professions as mentioned above like the other lay followers but they have never deviated from their duty of *Buddhist* practice.

#### 12.3.2 *Mahāyāni/Vajrayāni* Ideals:

More importantly, Nepalese *Buddhists* were driven by *Mahāyāni/Vajrayāni* ideals of skillful means towards benefiting others by every possible means (*Sarva prakāram Jagato Hitāye*). In due course that followed then-after, they preferred non- celibate monasticism in place of celibate monasticism. There were some remarkable *Mahāyānic* texts/doctrines which must have encouraged them to follow this alternative path (*Bodhisattva* path) in the changing environment within which they lived. Discussion on how *Mahāyāna* ideals played role in relaxation of *Vinaya* rules has been already made in earlier chapter VIII (in the subheading ‘On Path to *Mahāyāna*’).

#### 12.3.3 Loss of contact with Indian Monastic centres:

Destruction of monastic centres like Vikramśīla, Nālandā etc. in India after *Muslim* invasion around 13<sup>th</sup> century resulted in total loss of weakening communication with Indian monastic institutions which also must have assisted in the position of celibate monks in Nepal. By the end of 14<sup>th</sup> century, *Buddhism* totally died out in India. Collapse of the great monastic centres of India mainly Nālandā and Vikramśīla was a blow to Nepalese monasticism which later had to develop in isolation on their own. It happened in the crucial time when Nepalese monasticism was on the verge



withstanding many hardships caused by earthquakes, natural calamities like epidemics, internal political upheavals, turmoil and rulers' apathy during medieval period, All these incidents became responsible for far reaching consequences causing major changes in Nepalese monasticism.

It is often said that if Nepalese *Buddhism* depended only upon celibate monasticism, it could have been wiped out and vanished as in India. It can be assumed that *Buddhism* continued to exist in Nepal due to practical aspects of Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. Obviously, it would be very difficult to keep the observance of all the 227 celibate monastic rules or *prātimokṣya* of the monks. If one has to transgress some of these rules, there is no meaning of pretending as being a monk. In that case, it becomes far more better to follow the system prevalent in Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. However, actual cause and time of disappearance of celibate monks in Kathmandu valley can not be ascertained due to lack of authentic documents. The current tradition in Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism must have evolved as the result of struggle for the survival. And, it succeeded in doing so.

#### 12.3.4 Loss of tenancy system:

History shows that most of the monasteries had extensive land grants, known as *Agrahāras*<sup>1033</sup> which the donees enjoyed free of all taxes and revenues payable to the state. The object of such grants, as described in the inscriptions<sup>1034</sup> was to encourage learning and spiritual practices of monks by keeping them above cares and anxieties for the bare necessities of life as also to see that the monasteries grew into centres of education and cultural progress.<sup>1035</sup> *Lichchavi* rulers not only made lavish grants to *Buddhist* monasteries but also had great regard for *Buddhism* and *Buddhist* monks and supported whole heartedly the monasticism. Once the *Newār* kings were ousted by the *Śāha* dynasty from Gorkha who unified the modern state in 1769, discrimination against *Buddhists* and the change in land tenure laws undermined the tenancy system that had supported the *Newār* monastic

<sup>1033</sup> Regmi, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 235), Pp. 184-5

<sup>1034</sup> *Cābahil* Inscription, *Yāgbahāl* inscription of Śivadeva II praising Narendradev 's deeds

<sup>1035</sup> Dutta, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 116), P.31

system.<sup>1036</sup> Most of the extensive landholdings included in *Bāhā* property, of the period of *Thakuri Newār* kings (c. 750-1150 AD) was confiscated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by *Rānā* rulers in order to finance their wars with *Tibetans* and British.<sup>1037</sup> Most of the *Bāhās* and *Bahis* have some land registered with the government *guthī* office, the income from which is used for their services in the shrine and to finance their feast and festivals. But, due to various reasons such lands are being lost, and there arose crisis in the upkeep of the monasteries.

#### 12.4 Factors responsible for growing apathy against *Newār Buddhism*

Besides the factors causing changes in *Newār Buddhism*, there were certain other factors or incidences which are responsible for growing apathy towards it causing changes. Several factors are responsible for the apathy to Traditional *Newār Buddhism*. These factors can be discussed under three headings (1). Impact of Himalayan Border closure on *Newār Buddhism* (2). Impact of *Theravāda* movement and influence Anglo- German view and (3). Impact of Modernization.

##### 12.4.1 Impact of Himalayan Border closure on *Newār Buddhism*

One strong factor which binds together Himalayan dwellers is *Buddhism* and its related culture. *Buddhism* that thrived in Himalayan regions can be called Himalayan *Buddhism* which is influenced by *Tibetan Buddhism*. Though *Newār Buddhism* and *Tibetan Buddhism* are similar they were of separate culture but are interconnected to one another.

It is through Nepal that Tibet received *Buddhism* which after being accustomed with its local faiths like *Bon* (shamanism in the beginning) and *Mi-chos* (animism) became *Tibetan Buddhism*. In India whole *Buddhism* turned into *Vajrāyāna* after 8<sup>th</sup> century though several sects had evolved during the course of its development.<sup>1038</sup> It largely affected Nepalese *Buddhism* which also turned into *Vajrāyāna*. Likewise,

---

<sup>1036</sup> Johnson, and Renkin, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 1014), Pp. 707 -708

<sup>1037</sup> Allen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 37), Pp. 30-31

<sup>1038</sup> Swāmi Dwārikādās Śāstri, *Guhyasamājtantra or Tathāgataguhyaka*, (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2003), P. 7

*Tibetan Buddhism* became *Vajrāyāna* as it was established with the help of contemporary Nepalese and Indian Buddhist masters.

*Buddhism* was introduced to Tibet in 7<sup>th</sup> century by Tibetan Emperor Srong btsan Gampo. In the beginning Nepalese princess Bhṛīkuṭī and a group of Nepalese *Buddhist* scholars led by Śīlamanju played significant role in promoting *Buddhism* in Tibet by introducing *Buddhist* articles and later through massive translation works. Great Indian Buddhist masters like Śāntarakṣita, Padmasaṃbhava, Kamalaśīla (8<sup>th</sup> century), Atīśā (982-1054) who were instrumental in establishing *Buddhism* in Tibet also had worked for substantial period in Nepal before their action in Tibet. Himalayan region became totally Buddhistic (after *Buddhism* was firmly established in Tibet). According to historical sources, Nepal played an important role in the development of *Buddhism* and *Buddhist* heritage in Tibet and Himalayas. There is a long list of *Tibetan Buddhist* masters who received *Buddhist* initiation and teachings from Nepalese masters. Similarly, there is record of a number of Nepalese *Buddhist* masters who went to Tibet for teaching purpose. Nepal remained the centre for both Tibetan and Indian *Buddhists* for their interaction and as the transit route to their cross movement. And, Nepal was undoubtedly the centre for acquiring *Buddhist* articles and resources whether these be manuscripts, scriptures, sculptures, paintings, artisans, Buddhist masters and so forth.

#### 12.4.1.1 Himalayan impasse and border closure

Besides, so many natural barriers like low temperature, low oxygen pressure, high radiation value, low relative humidity, high altitude, irregular barren sloppy lands posing hindrances to dynamism (movement) in Himalayas, man-made artificial barrier like border closure has been most detrimental to the progress in Himalayas and neighbouring regions. The closure of northern border in the Himalaya implicitly began in the beginning of second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century as two sided movement was reduced to one way i.e. from Tibet to outside only. *Newārs* in Tibet were forced to leave. After Chinese annexation to Tibet in 1959, restriction was intensified and Tibetans were compelled to go to exile from Tibet. Later Tensions in the border region escalated to the Sino-Indian Border Conflict in 1962, and, the border was explicitly closed. Then, the Himalayan regions remained forbidden land for most of the time. The closure of Himalayan border brought to an end of aged

long trade and cultural relationship between two neighbouring countries (Nepal and Tibet) making impact on several aspects which affected inhabitants of neighboring areas.

Border closure in the Himalaya that associated with Tibetan diaspora caused flooding of Tibetan refugees in the Kathmandu Valley. In the past and still now considerable number of *Newārs* have trade links with Tibet and always have soft corner in their heart for *Tibetan Buddhists*.<sup>1039</sup> *Newār Buddhists* were sympathetic to *Tibetans* for several reasons. The time coincided with renaissance of *Theravāda Buddhism* in India through the impetus provided by Srilanka. Thus, two influencing *Buddhist* traditions- *Theravāda* and *Tibetan* as alternatives were exposed to *Newār Buddhist* adherents in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the initial struggle phase of *Tibetan Buddhists* in exile, *Newār Buddhists* supported them in many ways. As a result *Tibetan Buddhism* now stood as one of the influential religion in the world. On the other hand, *Newārs* are turning away from their traditional *Buddhism* and are found embracing alternatives forms of *Buddhism*. *Tibetan Buddhism* developed and spread remarkably while *Newār Buddhism* started facing decline. Since *Newār* and *Tibetan Buddhism* are similar in nature; there existed aged long tie between them and later drew much from the former, their impacts stand important. Following impacts can be mentioned in this regard.

**(1) Loss of financial donors/patronage checking embellishment and construction of Nepalese monasteries and other shrines for *Newārs***

*Newār* traders who frequently visited Tibet had good income from Lhasa trade. History has it that they contributed generously to *Newār Buddhism* by constructing or renovating monasteries, adding decoration to existing ones, and embellishing deities of the monasteries. Many established *caitya* or stupas in public or religious places. Besides, in several occasions, *Tibetan Buddhists* out of devotion also

---

<sup>1039</sup> (i) Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 23), Pp. 49-54

(ii) Lewis, "The Tuladhars of Kathmandu: A Study of Buddhist Tradition in a Newar Merchant Community" Columbia University: Ph.D. Dissertation, 1984, (Michigan: University Microfilm International, 1987)

(iii) Kesar Lall, *The Newar Merchants in Lhasa*, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2001)

constructed monasteries for *Newār Buddhists* e.g. *Munivihāra* of Bhaktapur.<sup>1040</sup> Some had constructed structures at *Svayambhū*, the emblem of *Newār Buddhism* and also renovated the great stupa.<sup>1041</sup> Many had constructed and renovated various stupas, sculptures and copied religious scriptures for *Newār Buddhists*. After border closure there was an acute crisis of financial donors leading to check in such activities. It is understandable that Tibetans also focused in building these for their own than for *Newār Buddhists*.

## (2) Reduction in income of Nepalese Buddhist masters

*Newār Buddhist* masters were getting precious gifts and offerings like gold, silvers, expensive stones like turquoise, corals etc from *Tibetan Buddhists* who would come to them for learning or as pilgrim to their monasteries. For example, Marpa lotsava, the founder of Tibetan *Kagyupā* sect is mentioned to have carried gold dust in his walking stick to meet his travel expense while visiting Nepal. It has already been mentioned above that Kathmandu was the centre of pilgrimage and learning. After border closure, this came to the halt leaving *Newār Buddhist* masters with no substantial income.

The unstable income of the *Buddhist* masters who acted as priests has certain connections with the waning of monastic behavior. The *Buddhist* masters and priests who had to live upon the gifts and alms given by the parishioners and devotees, faced severe shortage of income sources. This caused priesthood less sustainable for the learned *Buddhist* masters and their interest turned away in search of other professions.

## (3) Minimization of exorbitant *Buddhist* Practices

*Newār Buddhism* was vivacious and spectacular with several festivals and celebrations. Grand offerings like *Pañcadān*, *Na:dān*, *Samyak*, complex practices like *Mahābu* (*Mahāvali*), *Lakṣahuti*, celebrations like *Ahorātri*, *Chattisāmat* (worship of 36 *samvara*) were often performed for the welfare of own and all. They involve a huge amount of expenses. Practice of *dāna* i.e. liberality is considered meritorious act in *Buddhism*. Sponsors of these expensive but exclusive

<sup>1040</sup> The monastery constructed in 1666 A.D by *Tibetan* monks- rgya-ron and padma rdo-rje in memory of their father, Muniji/ Hemraj Shakya & T.R. Vaidya, *Medieval Nepal* (Colophons and Inscriptions), (Kathmandu: T.R. Vaidya, 1970), Inscription No. 33, P. 130

<sup>1041</sup> Rdo-rje tshe dbang Norbu and drgpa rinpoche added and renovated structures around *Swayambhu*

*Buddhist* practices were often from those *Newārs* who had made visit to Tibet.<sup>1042</sup> One who made visit to Tibet often exhibited such practices to establish his social claim that he earned enough. There was a tradition of visiting Tibet by *Newār Buddhist* masters. *Newār* traders also keep visiting there. Most of them, upon their return organized or sponsored monastic activities. One of the popular practices undertaken by them was *Na: dāna*. In this practice, the performer has to give away costly items like land, house, gold etc as offerings. Now such practices dwindled as a direct result of border closure. Only those practices remained which took the form of festivals like *Pañcadān* and *Samyak*. Celebration of optional *Pañcadān*, *Samyak dāna* and *Na: dāna* almost died out.

#### **(4) Decline in Buddhist scholarship**

*Newār Buddhism* had the glorious past history of the *Buddhist* scholarship which had produced and preserved treasure trove of *Buddhist Saṅskrit* literature in Nepal. And *Buddhist* scholarship developed to its fullest in *Newār Buddhism* became easily accessible source of literature for *Tibetans*. It enriched Tibetan *Buddhist* literature after *Saṅskrit* *Buddhist* scriptures were translated into Tibetan.

Till the closure of Himalayan border, scholarship existed in *Newār Buddhism* to some extent though it was in declining stage. *Newār Buddhist* masters had to maintain integrity and exercise their erudition as *Tibetan lāmās* frequently visited them for consultation. This compulsion for them was relaxed after border closure and *Newār Buddhism* saw further decline in their scholarship.

#### **(5) Breaking concealments**

*Newār Buddhism* and *Tibetan Buddhism* both are basically *Vajrayāna* having esoteric concealments in addition to exoteric parts. Therefore, esotericism (understood publicly as *Tāntricism*) is the part of their practice which requires special introductory instructions called initiations or *dīkṣā* or *abhiṣeka*. It is to be understood that their esoteric practice is merely a preparation for attainment of religious goal.<sup>1043</sup> It is based on a learned soteriology.<sup>1044</sup>

---

<sup>1042</sup> Lewis, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 1040)

<sup>1043</sup> Gellner, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 9), P. 281

<sup>1044</sup> *Ibid*, P. 317

But *Newār Buddhism* is often criticized for keeping its practice secret and *Tibetan* is praised for being more liberal revealing concealments. One should not forget that both *Newār* and *Tibetan Buddhism* have esoteric parts. *Tibetans* were compelled to divulge some of the teachings and practices after their diaspora from Tibet.<sup>1045</sup> The saying that Nepalese *Buddhism* drew in much of concealments while *Tibetan Buddhism* has no concealments is not totally true. Presence of several sects of *Tibetan* form of *Buddhism* can be taken as the result of prevalence of concealments among them. Teachings of a particular sect is concealed and confined to that particular sect. But, after Chinese takeover of Tibet resulting in exodus of *Tibetans*, many such concealments were broken and it so appeared that there is no concealment in *Tibetan* tradition.

#### **(6) Loss of motivation for devotion.**

*Newārs* were receiving a deep sense of devotion for *Vajrayānic Buddhist* practice through their kinsmen living in Tibet who were almost invariably affected by the sincere devotion that dominated *Tibetan* life. *Newār Buddhists* were encouraged to be loyal and sincere to their *Buddhist* tradition. There is no more such transfer of spirituality after border closure.

#### **(7) Split in *Newār Buddhism***

Monopoly and wholeness of the traditional *Newār Buddhism* has already begun to lessen with the introduction of *Theravāda Buddhism* in the beginning of second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century, and this disintegration got further impetus after Tibetan diaspora. Majority of *Newār* people, being *Buddhist* from the beginning, showed high degree of tolerance to both *Theravāda* and *Tibetan Buddhism* as they have good affinity to both these forms of *Buddhism*. *Newār Buddhists* consider *Theravāda* as a preliminary part of their practice. As pointed out by *Buddhist* scholars, there is a good degree of similarity between *Newār* and *Tibetan Buddhism*.<sup>1046</sup> So, from lay followers' perspective both are almost same. Therefore, *Newār Buddhists* did not hesitate to adopt *Tibetan Buddhism* as alternative to theirs. Thus, there is easy outflow of adherents from traditional Nepalese Buddhist tradition to both *Theravādin* and *Tibetan Buddhist* tradition. This has resulted in

---

<sup>1045</sup> Ram, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 33), P. 2

<sup>1046</sup> Hodgson, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 7), P. 3

growing negligence towards *Newār Buddhist* tradition. As a consequence now in Nepal there are *prominently three types of Buddhism*.<sup>1047</sup>

1. *Nepalese Buddhism* or *Newār Buddhism*.
2. *Theravāda Buddhism* and
3. *Tibetan influenced Buddhism* or *Tibetan Buddhism* or *Buddhism* of Northern Nepal.

Himalayan border closure virtually broke solidarity and integrity of *Newār Buddhists* resulting from the reaction of the growing influence of pathetic Tibetan *Buddhists* who managed to withstand initial difficult exiled /refugee life with the support of *Newār Buddhists*.

**12.4.2 Impact of *Theravada* movement and influence of Anglo-German view**  
Change in the monopoly of *Newār Buddhism* began to appear when India saw renaissance of *Buddhism* in the form of *Theravāda*, impetus for which was provided by Srilanka, in the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Agitated against then *Rānā* rulers who did not wish to see people educated, some enthusiastic revolutionists *Newār* youths took pain to diverge from traditional way in a bid to counteract *Rānā* policy and took another course taking religious ordination under newly revived *Theravāda* tradition in India.<sup>1048</sup> However, they were warmly welcomed by *Newār Buddhists* satisfying themselves that their youths did not take up another religion. With the help of *Newār Buddhists*, *Theravāda* monks made their clear presence in Nepal by around 1930. Majority of *Newār* people, being *Buddhist* from the beginning, did not resist *Theravāda*. Since *Newār Buddhist* tradition already had *Theravādin* fragment in their practice, they did not consider it alien. *Theravāda* is considered as preliminary part of *Newār Buddhism*. Therefore, *Newār Buddhists* accepted *Theravāda* as a part of their tradition. Thus, newly introduced *Theravāda* got readymade followers who were already *Buddhists* mostly by birth from *Newār* community. Those *Buddhists* who wanted to experience change followed available alternatives which were recently open to them. People not favouring rites and rituals began following *Theravādin*. Supposedly more disciplined and learned

---

<sup>1047</sup> Naresh Man Bajracharya, 'A Brief Introduction of Nepalese *Buddhism*' submitted at One Day Special Talk Program on *Buddhism* of China and Nepal, organized by China Study Center at Siddhartha Hall, Hotel Blue Star, Kathmandu, on 14<sup>th</sup> May, 2004.

<sup>1048</sup> The first celibate monk, Mahaprajna took initial monastic ordination according to *Tibetan* tradition before he become *Theravādin* monk.



monks trained in *Theravādin* countries like Srilanka, Myānmār or Thailand have been successful in attracting people. Furthermore, with the introduction of *Theravāda* in Nepal, views that markedly differed from *Theravāda* was labeled degenerate or corrupt. This very concept prevailed world wide for some years mostly during British colonial period when westerners became acquainted with *Buddhism* disseminated mainly through Srilanka.

The modern invention of "genuine" and "degenerate" *Buddhism* originates in nineteenth-century British colonial discourses, which legitimized only those forms of *Buddhism* that could be endorsed by modern European culture. These discourses, though deeply flawed, still hinder *Newār Buddhist* efforts to survive the encounter with modernity. As often pointed by modern scholars of *Buddhist* studies, there are two views regarding *Buddhism*<sup>1049</sup> - (1) Anglo-German school and (2) Franco-Belgian school.

Anglo-German school:- Over nearly a 100 years ago when even general information about *Buddhism* was minimal, at that time the Anglo-German school of *Buddhist* studies was the dominant school related to *Buddhist* studies. And the conclusions of this school were based solely on *Pāli* texts and *Theravāda Buddhism*, which was more easily available to the English colonials and thus to the English scholars like Rhys Davids, Hodgson, Waddell, Oldenberg, Beal, Sir Charles Eliot etc. So their views are also heavily influenced by the Anglo-German school. The basic view of this school of *Buddhist* scholars was that only the *Pāli* tradition as represented by the *Theravādins* was the true form of *Buddhism* and all other forms of *Buddhism* were distortions or adulterated. This notion has been proven inaccurate and misleading in the last 100 years of scholarship. Furthermore, this earlier view has not distinguished between High religion and Folk religion, which are found in all religious traditions. So, they have mixed them up in one single pot-pouri, which only confuses the issue rather than clarifies it. Therefore, those who view *Newār* monasticism from Anglo-German standpoint always grumble that it was a corrupt practice of *Buddhist* monasticism.

---

<sup>1049</sup> Sridhar Rana. "An Emic Critique of Austine Waddell's *Buddhism* and Lamaism of Tibet- A Gross Misrepresentation of the *Vajrayāna* of Tibet" *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of CNAS, Vol. 27, No. 2 (July 2000), 123- 154.

Once, even *Mahāsāṃghikā*, was labeled a heretic sect under the influence of Anglo-German school's concepts.<sup>1050</sup> This was based on the chart given in the *Pāli Kathā Vatthu* which shows, the *Mahāsāṃghikā* and all the other 18 *Nikāya* as heretical school's branching out of Mother *Theravāda*. At that time Chinese and Tibetan sources had not been studied. Today the view of this mother *Theravāda* and heretical *Mahāsāṃghikās* have been challenged after the study of charts found in Tibetan and Chinese traditions by three other *Buddhist* masters- 1. Vasumitra 2. Bhavya, 3. Vinitadeva. Today's scholarship have challenged this concept of Anglo-German school and there is no more the belief that the *Theravāda* alone represents the original *Buddhism* and that all others branched out from it. First of all the *Theravāda* itself is a branch of the *Vibhajjāvāda*<sup>1051</sup>, which itself is a branch of the *Sthaviravāda* which separated from the *Mahāsāṃghika*.<sup>1052</sup> Secondly, the *Theravāda* is also a branch out of the original *Buddhism* as much as *Mahāyāna*.

Franco-Belgian school – It considers *Sanskrit* traditional so as the part of *Buddhism*. The supporters of this school treated later literary sources, to be sure. They took seriously the works of Vasubandhu, Asanga and Haribhadra, works of the early medieval and medieval periods. They understood the *Buddha* to have not one, but multiple bodies, and finally that the real *Buddha* was thought to be “the *Dharmakāya*” which has no flesh or blood or bones. In light of this understanding of the *Buddha*, the *Buddhism* of later period was understood as a collection of loosely connected, increasingly intricate system of abstract theory.<sup>1053</sup> But, after *Theravāda* was introduced to Nepal, some of its adherents still stick to Anglo-German view not being exposed to changing understanding. They still have not been cooperative to *Newār Buddhism* but go on disparaging it.

#### 12.4.3 Impact of modernization

Previous state *Hinduism* and *Hindu* rulers could not make remarkable impact on *Newār Buddhism* except few conversion and syncretization. Citizens of Kathmandu valley and Himalayas mostly had remained Buddhist even though state leaning favoured *Hinduism*. But, the force of modernization is more influential than the

<sup>1050</sup> *Ibid*, P. 130

Richard H. Robinson, *The Buddhist Religion*, A Historical Introduction (Belmont 1970), Pp. 37-38

<sup>1051</sup> Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism*, (Dehi: Motilal Banarasiidass Publishers, Reprint 2007), P. 101

<sup>1052</sup> Bapat reprint, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 115ii), P. 98

<sup>1053</sup> Scophen, *Op.cit.* (f.n. 429), P. 259

force of Hinduization in Nepal affecting regional religiosity. And modernization for some *Buddhists* meant adoption of *Tibetan Buddhism* and *Theravāda* or treating religious culture as ridiculous and superstitious. As a revolution to then ruling regime i.e. *Rānā* regime in the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> century, practice deviated from the traditional way was considered revolutionary. So, in the recent past, and also during border closure period, many pursued alternative *Buddhist* paths, instead of following their traditional *Newār Buddhism*.

## CHAPTER XIII

### Conclusion and Recommendations

*Buddhist* monasticism has long attracted the interest of *Buddhist* studies scholars and historians outside Nepal, but the interpretation of the nature and function of monasteries across diverse cultures and vast historical periods remains a focus for debate. The subject is likely to interest today the educated public in our country and abroad. Curiosity about ancient *Buddhist* past is now more widely diffused. *Buddhism* thrived and made headway in Nepal as a religion of the people – a religion that was not a practice of celibate monkhood as it used to be. As stated above in earlier chapters, the history of *Buddhist* monasticism at a place is virtually the history of *Buddhist saṅgha* in that place. Both these monasticism and *Buddhist saṅgha* have also an abstract aspect in which they are regarded as spiritual entity. The history of *Buddhism* in Nepal is incomplete and one-sided if we consider it as only theoretical or speculative system without bringing into integration as the system of communal, national or religio-social life.

From the time of *Sākyamuni Buddha* to 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century, *Buddhist* adherents from southern plains kept thronging into *Nepal-maṇḍala* in course of migration and by the time of Aśoka period, Nepal had turned to famous *Buddhist* centre. And, *Buddhism* that thrived in Nepal became *Newār Buddhism* with its own distinctive features. *Newārs* and *Newār Buddhism* had hey days till the last of medieval period in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Whosoever came here and settled, they remained as *Newār* and their main religion was *Newār Vajrayānic Buddhism*. Nearly similar types of *Buddhism* were in practice in its neighbouring areas, Tibet in the north and Maghada, Bengāl, Sārnāth (Banaras) etc in the South. *Buddhists* of all these regions had interrelation and often held regular consultation and interactions on doctrinal matters. *Saṅskrit* is their scriptural language. Therefore, they had common doctrinal bases. Tibet, Nepal and India were religiously tied in a sort of *Buddhist* circuit. After total collapse of *Buddhism* in India due to *Muslim* invasion around thirteenth century, this circuit was broken. *Buddhist* monks fled from India taking with them whatever holy scriptures they could carry and took refuge in Nepal where *Saṅskrit Buddhist* scriptures were thus piled up to the collection

already made by Nepalese to such an extent that Nepal is now the storehouse of *Buddhist Sanskrit* literature. Though extermination of *Buddhist* connection with India was a blow causing upheaval in regional monasticism, *Newār Buddhism* still enjoyed sole monopolizing tradition throughout medieval period. Even in the periods when rulers inclined to *Hinduism*, no difference was seen in public adherence to *Buddhism*. Majority of people of *Nepal-maṇḍala* were *Buddhists* from the very beginning. They continued to exist persistently facing ups and downs in the history resulting in changes in their monasticism.

In the first half of 20<sup>th</sup> century *Newār Buddhist* adherents are exposed to two influencing *Buddhist* traditions- *Theravāda* and *Tibetan*. Change in above situation i.e. in the monopoly of *Newār Buddhism* began to appear when India saw renaissance of *Buddhism* in the form of *Theravāda*, impetus for which was provided by Srilanka, in the first quarter of that century. Agitated against then *Rānā* rulers who did not wish to see people educated, some enthusiastic and revolutionist *Newār* youths took pain to diverge from traditional way in a bid to counteract *Rānā* policy and took another course taking religious ordination under newly revived *Theravāda* tradition in India. However, they were warmly welcomed by *Newār Buddhists* satisfying themselves that their youths did not take up another religion. With the help of *Newār Buddhists*, *Theravāda* monks made their clear presence in Nepal by around 1930. Since *Newār Buddhist* tradition already had *Theravādin* fragment in their practice, they did not consider it alien. *Newār Buddhists* accepted *Theravāda* as a part of their tradition. Thus, newly introduced *Theravāda* got readymade followers who were already *Buddhists* mostly by birth from *Newār* community.

On the other side, Tibet never faced the situation like India did, *Buddhism* continued unabatedly in *Tibetan* regions since its inception from 7<sup>th</sup> century, and Nepalese were well acquainted with *Tibetan Buddhism*. People of Northern Nepal practice *Buddhism* influenced by *Tibetan* type due to their geographical proximity with Tibet. Their effect on Nepalese *Buddhists* was noticed after *Tibetan* Diaspora following Chinese occupation of Tibet in 1959. Activities of *Tibetan* refugees and others who fled from Tibet and settled in Kathmandu valley, made significant affect on Nepalese *Buddhism*. In the past and still now considerable number of *Newārs* have trade links with Tibet and always have soft corner for *Tibetan Buddhists*. *Newār Buddhists* in a good number followed *Tibetan Buddhism*. *Newār*

and *Tibetan Buddhism* both are *Vajrayānic* forms and are similar. So, from lay followers' perspective both are almost same. Therefore, *Newār Buddhists* did not hesitate to adopt *Tibetan Buddhism* as alternative to theirs. As a consequence now in Nepal there are prominently three types of *Buddhism*. (1) *Nepalese Buddhism* or *Newār Buddhism* (2) *Theravāda Buddhism* and (3) *Tibetan influenced Buddhism* or *Tibetan Buddhism* or *Buddhism* of Northern Nepal.

*Buddhism* extant in Nepalese style with own distinctive features assimilating local values, which was kept alive even in adverse condition through the effort of only Nepalese people and which is the traditional Nepalese *Buddhism* is not now the sole monopolizing *Buddhist* tradition of Nepal. Even though when opportunities arise for display of Nepalese styled *Buddhist* culture, Nepalese do not fail to exhibit glimpse of this traditional Nepalese *Buddhism* but care less for its proper up-keep. Majority of *Newār* people, being *Buddhist* from the beginning, showed high degree of tolerance to both *Theravāda* and *Tibetan Buddhism* as they have good affinity to both these forms of *Buddhism*. Therefore, there is easy outflow of adherents from traditional Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition to both *Theravādin* and *Tibetan Buddhist* tradition. Situation grew to such an extent that even *Sākyas* and *Vajrācāryas*, the back bone of *Newār Buddhism* are found adopting these alternative courses. Influential and wealthy laity community of *Tulādhars* almost have adopted *Theravāda*. This has resulted in growing negligence towards Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. Those *Buddhists* who want to experience change followed available alternatives which are recently open to them. People not favouring rites and rituals began following *Theravādin* way while those who like potent or organized pattern in congruent with foreign followers went after *Tibetan type*. As a result monasteries under new *Theravāda* tradition and *Tibetan Buddhist* traditions are increasing year after year, while formation of new monastery under Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition came to nearly full halt. All existing monasteries are of medieval and/or earlier origin and most of them are in dilapidated condition reflecting present situation of monasticism. The culture *Buddhism* has taught in Nepal and the *saṅgha* and monasteries it propagated undoubtedly still survived; in fact it remains to this day as a vital functioning part of Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism. In its progress through long centuries, it continually annexed to itself the culture and art, the traditions and folk lores, the pieties and emotions of the people. Clearly, *Newār Buddhist* monasticism is now at stake. It at present is almost virtually reduced to *Newār* culture. In this way, both newly introduced forms of *Buddhism* thrived well

with direct and indirect support of *Newār Buddhists* at the cost of their own tradition.

Monasticism is meant to allow maximum time for *dharma* practice. Almost all major religions like *Buddhism*, *Christianity*, *Hinduism*, *Jainism*, *Taoism*, and the *Sufi* branch of *Islam*, have the concept of monasticism, though the expressions differ considerably. Although the word monasticism is derived from the root Greek, *Monos* or Latin term *Monachus* meaning solitary (Solitary practitioner, practicing in solitude), it is borrowed from *Christianity* and so is of later origin, but the concept prevailed long before. As all the prerequisites of *dharma* practice are gathered together at one place like the monastery, it virtually seemed like the practices done in the monastery. Those pursuing a monastic life are usually called monks or *brethren* (brothers) if male, and nuns or *sisters* if female. Both monks and nuns may also be called *monastics*. Technically, monasticism embraces both the life of the hermit, characterized by varying degrees of extreme solitude, and the life of the cenobite, that is, the monk living in a community offering a limited amount of solitude.

Monasticism is an integral part in all *Buddhist* traditions. In no other religion have monks played such a central part as in Buddhism. The value of monasticism is as an institution supporting contemplation, simplicity and non-violence. It serves as living proof that it is possible to live a humane life based on contentment and compassion. Unlike *Buddhist* monasticism stressing upon middle way practice, *Hindu* monasticism is mostly a severe form of asceticism in which the ascetics tortures themselves physically to please the god for attainment of salvation (*mokṣa*). *Hindu* asceticism generally means celibacy, self mortification, wandering, begging, and a special diet. Monastic routine consists mainly of liturgical work, meditation, and study (teaching/learning activities).

After advent of *Buddhism* during the time span of about 2600 years, there has been a lot of changes in various aspects of *Buddhism*. With the rise of *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, 500 years after *Mahāparinirvāṇa* of the *Buddha*, householder practitioners also grew parallel to celibate practitioners. And when *Vajrayāna* sect developed, celibate practitioners were more challenged. This also opened up and broadened the field of *Buddhism* accommodating all sorts of practitioners irrespective of gender, celibacy issues, geographical barriers and so forth.

Isolation from the society was never the cue of *Buddhist* monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. There is little scope for individualism and the aspiration to transcend society and pursue an existence outside its framework. *Newār* monasticism related most closely to the life of the people- the aspect that is seen in the organization of its *saṅgha* and the functioning of its monasteries (*vihāra*). In other words, *Newār* monasticism is practiced within society, and very much as part of it. The practice of *Buddhist* monasticism is like most other activities pursued collectively within the framework of society. Hence, it integrated the institution of monkhood into society of householders for if there can be liberation in *Newār Buddhism* it can, in a sense, only be within, not outside society. Nepalese *Buddhism* does not see itself in the light of pure *Buddhist* teaching. Rather, it views in the light of the *Mahāyāna*, and more particularly of the *Svayambhū purāṇa* and related literature that support monastic tradition in householders' condition but still render the words of the *Buddha*. There is only as much scope for *Buddhism's* soteriological dimension as this very close-knit society allows for. Soteriological goal is reserved for serious practitioners, and so it is concealed within esoteric practice. Thus, Nepalese monasticism exists in an attenuated form due to intermingling with the culture. It is now the cultural aspect of the religion which is historically and sociologically more significant. An eminent American anthropologist, Henry S. Coon, identifies culture with the sum total of things people do as a result of having been taught. Monasticism can be compared here as the sum total of monastic functions carried out by the monastics or the *saṅgha* members at the monastery. The *Newār* monasticism can not be disposed of as a mere historical phenomenon in our cultural-history; it has been borne along by the stream of its continuity and is part of its continuum. The history of monasticism is bound up with the history of the *saṅgha*. Although monastic activities seem turned into socio-cultural outfit, it is still the part of monasticism as they are carried out in the monastery by the *saṅgha* members. Though old, numerous monasteries still survive with functional *saṅghas* that convene regular annual councils. Major functions like *pravajyā* (ordination i.e. making of monks) of neophytes, *ācā luyigu* (ceremony of making *vajracārya*), *thāyepā luyigu* (ceremony of making elders), *saṅgha* meeting (council), religious observances like *vrata*, various kinds of *pūjā* observances including *Saptavidhanuttara pūjā*, *diśi pūjā*, *carhe pūjā*, monastic festivals like *Pañcadān*, *Samyakdān*, recitation of hymns, scriptures etc. are still carried out in the monastery in addition to daily round of functions. These activities are the part



and parcel of monasticism though they look as socio cultural activities since their centre of accomplishment is the monastery.

Monasticism is fundamental to both *Mahāyāna* and *Theravāda Buddhist* philosophies and is present wherever *Buddhism* existed. Nepal was no exception and possessed a monastic establishment that adhered to the basic *Buddhist* ideological norms. At the same time, however, Nepalese monasticism differed markedly from other forms of *Buddhist* monasticism in its utilization of a philosophy in profound use of rituals.

Almost all major *Buddhist* sects that appeared in the *Buddhist* history had made their presence in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Hiuen Tsang (629-645) in his travel account mentioned presence of some 2000 monks in *Nepal-maṇḍala* belonging to *Hinayāna* (Lesser vehicle) and *Mahāyāna* (Greater vehicle). Presence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* sect and *Vajrayāna* sect (the deep rooted form of *Mahāyāna*) is indicated and proved by *Licchavī* inscriptions. *Sarvāstivādins* and *Caityavādins* were known to have existed in Nepal through various *Buddhist* texts related to them and *caitya* culture still prevalent in Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition. Essence of all these *Buddhist* sects mixed with the local flavour of the valley had contributed to generation of uniqueness of present Nepalese *Buddhist* tradition. Monopoly of celibate monks and nuns in the *saṅgha* was lessened in due course of time in the *Buddhist* history. From the available sources, it seems that householders were introduced into the *saṅgha* by *Mahāsāṃghikās*. *Sarvāstivādins* were seen to create and nurture a separate group of householder monks who kept shaven head but remained at home with the privilege of being monastic. Influence of *Mahāsāṃghikā* and *Sarvāstivāda* both is noticeably evident in the monasticism of Nepal. With the emergence of *Mahāyāna*, a group of practitioners appeared who preferred to practice monasticism in household condition even after taking ordination. In this way householder monks in the monasticism gradually grew and there is a clear presence of householder monks in Nepalese monasticism till now. Motivation for being householder monks was provided by *Buddhist* scriptures like *Bodhipathapradīpa*, *Ādikarmapradīpa*, *Adyavajrasaṃgraha*, *Kriyāsaṃgraha*, *Kriyāsaṃmucaya*, *Śikṣāsaṃmucaya* etc. An early *Mahayana* text *Ugrapariprecchā* which is no more available in *Saṃskrit* original has direct bearing with the tradition of *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The text gave obvious mandate of being a celibate monk for some time only after taking *pravajyā*, and then practicing the *dharma* staying at householder state still enjoying

the status of a monk. Another early *Mahāyāna* text *Surangāmā-samādhi sūtra* has instructions for the monks to behave in householder way to dissipate *Buddha's* teaching among general people.

Wherever *Buddhism* flourished, monastic tradition existed. In *Buddhist* countries, the religion has always been structured around a solid core of monasticism. To most Asian *Buddhists*, it would be impossible to imagine *Buddhism* without monks and monasteries. Monasticism and *Buddhism* have become complimentary to one another. It is through the monastic activities of the *saṅgha* members that *Buddhism* persisted. Nepalese case is not the exceptional one. Since all the machineries or components of monasticism like monasteries, *saṅgha*, monks or active *saṅgha* members, their commitment, regular councils are still intact in *Buddhist* tradition of *Nepal-maṇḍala*, the allegation that there is no monasticism becomes invalid and not true. Nonetheless, as discussed earlier under the heading of components of monasticism, the major components of *Buddhist* monasticism had almost remained same throughout the history. Changes were seen mostly in paraphernalia and details of the components. Therefore, *Newār Buddhism* is also a complete *Buddhism* with its own system of monasticism, as it has been characterized. *Newār Buddhism* was subjected to adaptations and development in a cultural and geographical setting. Nepal is the only country in the world where *Buddhism* originated during the time of the *Buddha* and continued unabatedly even today. In other words, *Buddhist* monasticism continued to exist in Nepal though it had undergone several changes. While it became successful in keeping continuity preserving so many elements of continuity which transcend periodization of history, it incorporated many changes. Yet, scriptural base was also maintained to justify changes adopted in Nepalese monasticism. *Buddhist* monasticism in Nepal may be viewed continuous in terms of continuous prevalence of *Buddhism* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. The continuity of monasticism in Nepal has been proved on the basis of perennially existing monasteries and their *Saṅgha* tradition and other monastic components. The available sources like existing monasteries, *saṅghas*, *sanghic* activities, inscriptions, manuscripts, texts, colophons and other published materials, public hearsay also confirm it. If there was no continuity of monasticism in Nepal, the *Buddhism* must have ceased to exist long before as in India.

The components of monasticism are still intact with Nepalese Buddhist practice. However, it is true that celibate monasticism declined in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. Celibacy

is observed during the time of ordination and other religious occasions depending upon the situation of performance. Following ordination celibate monasticism is observed usually for four days only. *Newār Buddhist* tradition is the blend of monastic and householder schemes based upon *Mahāyāna Buddhism*, modeled upon the accounts of Sākyamuni *Buddha*'s former lives was concerned with laypeople and this world while *Srāvakyāna Buddhism* was a monastic form of *Buddhism* characterized by withdrawal from everyday world. Nepalese *Buddhism* is the admixture of these two forms. Therefore, it has both monastic and household functions. It is not the corrupt practice as it has been publicized or some outsiders feel it; it is faultless as it is also based on true *Buddhist* doctrines of *Mahāyāna* which had also been the source of *Buddhist* practice in *Tibetan Buddhism*, *Chinese Buddhism*, *Korean Buddhism* and *Japanese Buddhism*. Due to its uniqueness, Nepalese type stood as separate distinctive off-shoot of *Buddhism* which is to be found nowhere else except Kathmandu valley. There are doctrinal bases for every major change incorporated in *Newār* monasticism so that its authenticity is proved. Although *Newār Buddhism* is the sole living representative of the South Asian *Mahāyāna* tradition, it remains largely ignored and has negligible Western support, while other forms of *Buddhism* spread rapidly.

Only *Newār Buddhists* had kept *Buddhism* in total continuity throughout the *Buddhist* history from Sākyamuni *Buddha* to present day in Nepal. Only this tradition had carried the sum total thorough *Buddhist* history. Therefore, the whole *Newār Buddhist* tradition itself is a world heritage as it also represents last surviving Indian *Buddhist* tradition in the world. If support is made for uplift of *Newār Buddhism*, every one can be benefitted. Still there is a lot more in the bosom of *Newār Buddhism* to be revealed to the world. Lack of publicity and support in home and from outside caused it to be in the verge of extinction which is also aided by so called modernization. Several factors are responsible for the apathy to Traditional *Buddhism* and its monasticism. Now, it is time to pay proper attention to keep it living as it was. If the flaws prevalent in it are rectified, it can be the best model of *Buddhist* practice for the general people of the world and it can be helpful in bringing world peace. For it, some discrepancies or unfavourable changes which should be taken into consideration and be altered in positive way are as follows:

1. Religion and religious practices have undergone several changes. So, Nepalese monasticism also had undergone changes significantly till Medieval period. But modern scholars did not adequately trace the source of changes to justify them. This resulted in impression that *Newār Buddhism* imbibed deliberately arbitrary corrupt practices. Most of the chief features of Nepalese *Buddhism* of which Nepalese feel proud and project them as the unique ones seemed contentious in want of right justification.
2. It could not change according to demands of modern period. What had been changed till Medieval period, is simply dragged forward in modern period. Therefore, it seems less appealing to young generation. In other words, further changes are required to be suitable to modern period.
3. It gave vent to alternative forms of *Buddhism* i.e. *Theravāda* and *Tibetan Buddhism* at the cost of its own existence. *Newārs* did not feel need of change in their *Buddhist* practice system. To them change means adoption of either newly introduced *Theravāda* or *Tibetan Buddhism*. In doing so, they feel they are not deviated from the religious duty.
4. The unstable income of the *Buddhist* masters who performed as priest has certain connections with the waning of monastic behavior. After the conversion of monastic communities into the castes, *Vajrācāryas* who acted as the priests and had to live upon the gifts and alms given by the parishioners, faced acute shortage of income sources because when it came to offering to the priests, small monetary denomination like coins and notes of small amount are used and materials offered also happened to be of low quality. This caused priesthood less sustainable for the *Vajrācāryas* and interest of learned *Vajrācārya* turned away in search of other professions.
5. *Lack of clear cut lineage*- Though *Newār Buddhism* is the form of *Vajrāyāna* based on teacher disciple lineage succession. This lineage can not be traced at present beyond 4 or 5<sup>th</sup> generation due to some reasons. Nepalese did not give importance to the account of lineage
6. *Lack of celibate monks*- Presence of celibate monks could have better influences but this is lacking at the present situation in Nepalese monasticism. There is a strong belief that celibate monkhood per se was

superior to secular status. Even the monks who are labeled “marginal” or “bad” monks, are considered superior to their lay counterparts. In the society “the worst in the monastic life is better than the best in secular life”. Therefore, importance of celibate monastics should not be under-estimated. Besides, there is a lot of benefit in having celibate practitioners from religious perspectives.

7. *Too much dependence upon rituals-* *Newār Buddhism* became too much dependent upon the rites and rituals. Though these are also the part of the practice, too much dependency on rituals resulted in decline of *Buddhist* scholarship at present. *Newārs* pay no heed to stress and explain the philosophy behind the rites and rituals which are paramount in Nepalese *Buddhism*.
8. *Lack of sound scholarship at present-* Nepalese monasticism had the glorious past history of the sound *Buddhist* scholarship which had produced and preserved treasure trove of *Buddhist Saṅskrit* literature in Nepal. Besides following several *Mahāyāna sūtras*, *Newār Buddhists* in the past reworked thoroughly on the scriptures like the *Kārandavyuha* (15<sup>th</sup> century work), *Avadānasataka*, many *Jātaka* and *Avadāna* stories so as to adjust them to a Nepalese setting and relocate the main action there. *Newār Buddhism* brought out another important text, *Svayambhū purāṇa* as a part of literary exercise. But due to excessive dependency upon rituals and other reasons, it dwindled at present. Now, there is conspicuous absence of famed scholars and renowned practitioners who could contribute to *Buddhist* doctrine and learning. At present, there is very less scholarship in the *Bāhās* and *Bahis*. The *Dharma* is less preached and explained to the faithful, though it is evident from the large number of extant manuscripts written and copied in Nepal that such scholarship did exist.
9. One of the most inquisitive features of *Newār* monasticism is its classical duty of preaching the *Dharma* by the *saṅgha*. But, this duty has almost been abandoned. Today there are fewer and fewer public sessions devoted to this activity. Furthermore, in religious observances like the *vratas* and *saṁskāra karma* which necessitate *Dharma* preaching by the *Buddhist* masters for attending devotees, the *Buddhist* masters will usually not render the story

- (*vratakathā*) clearly or engage the intellect of the participants by connecting the *Dharma* with the rituals. It could not attract and touch the minds of the youths. It also weakens the tradition today.
10. *Newār Buddhist* masters have not been serious in spreading the *Dharma*. Youngsters hardly understand what the masters are saying. Making the *Dharma* lively again, the modern *monastics* must take the “*guru*” in their title seriously. They seemed to be in hang-over of their glorious past. They need to follow the old tradition of spreading the *dharma*: all the *sūtras* indicate that the *Buddha* preached his *Dharma* for the good of all human beings, sending his first disciples in the four directions to preach in local dialects. But *Newār* monastics seem not adequately complying this duty.
  11. *Newār* monasticism is a closed system, so outsiders are not freely allowed. It sounds strange that the *Newār saṅgha* would stop acting for the benefit of all humanity, but just for *Newārs* alone. In the past history, *Tibetans* learned from *Newārs*. Indians and Srilankans were allowed for interaction with *Newār* monastics. Later, confinement was imposed within *Newār* community.
  12. Abandonment of wearing monastic robes during monastic occasions also caused *Newār* monastic functions less attractive for the viewers. Householder monks of Korea and Japan wear monastic robes during religious attendance which look graceful. So, practitioners must not neglect wearing prescribed garbs while performing their rituals.

Below mentioned are some of the merits or advantages of Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism.

1. *Punyānumodaṇ*- It is an act of dedicating good work on others’ behalf. Good action can be dedicated to loved ones. This is one of the remarkable features of *Newār Buddhism*. Similarly, religious performance can be done for the faithful (parishioner) through the medium of expert practitioners. Aspirant needs not be disappointed that he does not know or is not well versed in *Buddhist* practice. He can avail the same benefit even in cramped or disabled condition through *Newār Buddhist* way of practice, as an experienced practitioner gets.

2. Buddhism adapted to lay life: *Newār Buddhism* is unique because it has survived without a permanent, celibate monks. Interested person can be sincere follower of the *Buddha* without being a celibate monk. Westerners, many lay people, educated, urban, wealthy people i.e., non-celibate people with family and jobs need/want teachings and practices that have been adapted to lay life. At present waves of Applied *Buddhism* is resonating in the world with the vision of applying the practice in day to day busy life. In this regard, *Newār Buddhism* with its unique monastic pattern could serve a model that portrays how *Buddhism* can be followed without being celibate monk, in married householder condition.
3. More opportunity for Buddhist enthusiasts: It has something unique to offer lay people seeking high level practice and teachings but unwilling or unable to remain as monks or nuns permanently. In *Newār* system of monasticism, the monastics behave like laity as per instructions given in early *Mahāyāna* scriptures like *Surangāmāsamādhi sūtra*, *Ugrapariprechcha sūtra* etc, and scriptures of early medieval period like *Ādikarma Pradip*, *Advayavajrasaṃgraha*, *Kriyāsamuccaya* etc.
4. Persistence/Durability: Due to prevalent perpetual caste communities of *Buddhist* followers including monastics, it has proved to be remarkably durable - an important factor in its conservation and social structure, irrespective of its other disadvantages. Monastics turned into caste community of *Vajrācāryas* and *Śākyas*. Therefore, it can be theoretically said that till there remain *Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* and other assisting *Buddhist* castes who act as laity, *Newār Buddhist* monasticism can not be challenged and its survival is ensured.
5. The existing *Newār Buddhist* monasticism contributes to understanding the history of *Mahāyāna* doctrine, rituals, and festivals. *Newār* monasticism provides important information as to what was the type of *Buddhism* when it was in the threshold of extinction in India in Medieval period. Without knowing history of *Newār* monasticism, study of thorough *Buddhist* history will not be complete. It provides sufficient information on the trend of *Buddhist* monasticism prevalent at that time in India as *Newār* monastic

tradition represents the last surviving kind before total collapse of *Buddhism* in India (Bengāl).

6. Buddhist art and architecture: *Newār Buddhist* tradition is rich in *Buddhist* art and architecture which are available in their finest. Now surviving *Newār* monasticism disguised in *Newār Buddhist* culture is a great and important treasure. *Newār Buddhist* monasticism, is an important part of *Buddhist* history which has played a great role in the development of *Buddhist* art in South Asia and in Tibet. *Newār Buddhist* monastics were/are householder earning their livelihood through various blameless professions which are mostly craftsmanship. Their professions fortified with religious devotion, zeal, dedication and sincerity have given rise to wealth of *Buddhist* art that stood par excellence in precision. Art creation is not only their profession but also their religious practice which bestow them merits according to their view.
7. Buddhist literatures: It had been established fact that Nepal is the cornucopia of *Buddhist Saṅskrit* literatures which now find route to other countries. It was due to *Buddhism* that *Newārī* literary language prospered. Thousands of *Saṅskrit Buddhist* scriptures were copied or written in *Newārī* scripts like *Bhujimol*, *Pācumol*, *Raṅjanā*, *Pracalit* etc. Several of them were translated into *Newārī*. *Nepal lipi* (scripts of Nepal), *Nepal Samvat*, *Nepal Bhāṣā* have helped preserve the originality and identity of Nepal. The terms like *Nepal-maṇḍala*, *Nepal Samvat*, *Nepal Bhāṣā*, the religion, art and culture of Nepal are all connected with the *Buddhism* of Nepal and its tradition. This is also one reason that Nepalese *Buddhism* is called *Newār Buddhism*. Beautiful and artful *Raṅjanā* script was so popular not only in Nepal but also in Tibet that most of the *Mantras*, *Dhāraṇīs* and scriptures were written in it. *Newārs*, *Newārī* language and *Buddhism* are so closely associated that they should not be neglected. Therefore, to denigrate *Newār Buddhism* is to miss out one of the important historical part of the *Buddhism*. Scholars could get benefit from the rich literary heritage of *Newār Buddhism*.
8. The wonderful ritual traditions of *Mahāyāna/Vajrayāna Buddhism* are found nowhere else in the world as in Nepal. There are many *Buddhists*, including Japanese and Westerners, eager to learn about and study religious art.



People now understand the connection between rituals and art; so curiosity grew in the subject 'ritual art' and *Newār* monasticism. They find their own spiritual understanding deepened by exploring *Newār Mahāyāna Buddhist* beliefs and practices.

9. Besides, various traditions like art, literature, and ritual, Nepalese monasticism still hold the vanishing tradition of *Buddhist* healing, *Buddhist* astrology, *Buddhist* divination, horoscope creation and reading etc which in one hand stood upon *vajrayānic* tantric base and in the other hand possess Nepaleseness.

10. Nepalese monasticism is a true middle way practice. It can be said middle way between monk's and householder's practice.

*Newār Buddhist* monasticism can be called a Middle way practice between monastic and householder pursuit towards Buddhahood since it is the combination of and balance between both. It needs a good deal of perseverance to play a role of monastics in householder condition. Primitive *Buddhism* was entirely genuine monastic and of limitless fervently gifted. Such monasticism is nearly impossible these days if it is to be followed sincerely. To lead a life of a monk fully dependent on the alms is almost unfeasible in today's modern scenario. It is not good to pretend to be a monk wearing a *Ciara* but goes on violating rules because of changing conditions. The *Newār* way of monasticism makes one free of alms dependency for the monks, yet keeping the tradition running. *Newār Buddhist* monasticism being truly the middle way between main stream celibate monasticism and lay householder practice could be model for new generation monasticism in the world if other flaws are removed.

Thus, as with all worldly things, Nepalese monasticism has both advantages and disadvantages. But some scholars are known to have only negative one-sided remarks against Nepalese monasticism. Most of the western scholars, beginning from Brian H. Hodgson, along with Henry Oldfield, the British writer of the mid nineteenth century, Sylvian Levi, the Great French Indologist, David Snellgrove and so forth condemned *Newār Buddhism* as corrupt, degenerate or decadent mostly for the replacement of *Buddhist* monks by the hereditary castes of householder practitioners, and in lacking proper monastic system. Western view on

*Newār Buddhism* relies much upon Hodgson's comments as he is supposed to be the pioneer in doing research work on *Newār Buddhism* in early nineteenth century. It seemed they made hasty and blind assumption about Nepalese *Buddhist* monasticism without thorough peep into their system. Some reckless observers are of opinion that there is no monasticism in Nepalese *Buddhist* when they saw no apparent monks in *Newār* monasticism. If so, a very striking question arises what and why numerous *Buddhist* monasteries which are still extant in Kathmandu valley, stood for. The monasteries still have active *saṅgha*. The valley is distinguishingly known for its old monasteries which attract scores of visitors/tourists even today. Every sensible person can easily assume these were not mere buildings. Design and structure of these monasteries also silently give clear indication that these must have been used for special purpose which could be non other than practice and propagation of *Dharma*. Ironically, there are still some fellows who accept presence of monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala*, but labeled it a corrupt practice. They are not analyzing or understanding *Newār Buddhist* monasticism but only dismissing it by labeling it as degenerate or corrupt practice. The ground for such label is not certain. Is it simply because there are householder monks or the tradition is full of rituals or there is no dress code or use of profane objects like meat or alcohol. Had one studied adequately or had one known the actual history of development of *Buddhist* monasticism, he will not make such irresponsible remarks. Scholars of later generation like John K. Locke, David Gellner, Siegfried, Southwold, John H. Hottington, Todd Lewis, Alexander Rospatt, William Douglas etc seem convinced to regard *Newār Buddhist* tradition as one of the true facet of *Buddhism* that had evolved in South Asia. According to them *Newār Buddhism* emerges as an intact tradition, and as an example bearing out how adaptable a religion *Buddhism* proved to be over the vast expanse of space and time. As the faculty of Buddhist study spread inducing research based upon all available Buddhist literary sources including *Pāli*, *Saṅskrit*, *Chinese*, *Tibetan* etc. Anglo-German view which took only *Pāli* based teachings as the genuine faded away. The view is being replaced by Franco-Belgian view that treats *Sanskrit* based Buddhist literature also history proved and equally authentic. Thus legitimacy is accepted for all sorts of *Buddhism* like Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese etc that evolved in the world history. So, it applies to *Newār Buddhism* too.

### Recommendations

Drastic or big changes can not be brought about soon. So, the high aiming at abolition of much criticized casteism, introduction of new comers from outside to the existing *saṅgha* and so forth are not possible at the moment. However, an instance of conferring *pravajyā* to an Australian national in *Newār* monastic way should be taken as a historic event. Similarly, the practice of ordination rendered to the boys of crossed parents (mostly offsprings of *Vajrācārya* or *Śākya* fathers and non monastic mothers) had begun a long back. In this direction, a few active Buddhist organizations like *Nepalko Boudha Dharma Saṅgha*, *Nepal Paramparāgata Boudha Dharma Saṅgha*, and *Vajracharya Pūjā-vidhi Adhyayan Samiti* have been liberal to carry out such activities. Thus, further change is underway. But those newly ordained ones are not considered *saṅgha* members of main stream *Newār* monasticism. Till a century before, *Newār* monasticism was well adapted to a stable, strong traditional and hierarchical society, but with rapid changing time its pace of change lagged behind. In today's modern age, it will be difficult for *Newār* monasticism to survive when its patrons are inclined to follow alternative courses labeling it old and outdated one if some changes are not incorporated in its system. Some sorts of rectification can be suggested for the uplift and smooth continuity of Nepalese monasticism in future.

1. The convention of regular meeting demonstrates the ongoing vitality of *Buddhist* monasticism as an institution. Holding *Buddhist* council is well maintained, but it is limited nowadays to celebration of feast meal and conduction of some rituals. At present the annual meeting is not much more than a social event, a common *pūjā* and a feast. There should be other religious and constructive activities too like holding *dharma* discourse, propagation of *dharma*, meditation, *vihāra* construction, improvement of *vihāra* conditions etc. so that the event lives like actual Buddhist council as in the past.
2. **Dress code:** Some sort of robes should be designed and fixed and rules should be made to wear it at least at the time of conduction of rituals and other monastic activities and in monastic gathering imparting clear identity of *Newār Buddhists*. It looks funny to see the monastic attendants doing their job keeping one shoulder free of cloth by pulling the sleeve down in mad fashion. It is understood that it is done as if they are wearing *cīvara* in

*parupanna* style but looked bizarre. Sometimes, monastics wear a band of red cloth as a vestige of *cīvara* during religious observances. Why not *Newār* monastics wear the prescribed monastic dress while doing monastic functions so that their monastic personality is well conveyed in society.

3. It is high time to give way to reappearance of some celibate monks. Fully renunciated celibate monks have high status in *Buddhism*. It creates spiritual environment and help gain sympathy and honour from laity. Many of the problems within the *Newār Saṅgha* are rooted in the householder monastic ideology that dominates the *Śākya* and *Vajrācārya* castes. Now, it is the time to set few examples of resurrection of celibate monks in *Mahāyāna* way in Nepalese monasticism. This will be like having a bunch of new attractive flowers in the garden of religiosity in Nepal.
4. Use of meat and liquor should be avoided at least in ordinary publicly seen rituals (exoteric rituals), as it caused a lot of controversy. Though *Vajrayāna* has its own philosophy in using these items, it is less known to laity. Meat and liquor are the part of rituals of *yogatantra*, in which *dāka*, *dākinis* are also summoned and these are meant for them. For actual practitioners, meat and liquor bear the same meaning as it is to any general items. But, it is taboo or macabre for the general public. According to *Vajrayāna* view, there is no substance which is intrinsically good or bad. The substance or the *dharma* becomes good or bad depending upon the way it is used. If it is used methodically for good cause, it turns to be good otherwise bad. For example a knife which is basically neutral but it turns to be bad for those who do not know the method to handle it, they may hold it at the blade and get harmed. If one knows the method of handling, a knife proves to be very useful object. Similarly, a snake is neither bad nor good. For those who do not know the method of handling snakes, it is a bad creature. But those who know the method of handling snakes can take a lot of benefit from snakes. *Vajrayāna* teaches us using right method in handling. So, it is also called vehicle of Methods. Therefore, meat and liquor are not treated as bad or taboo by *Vajrayāna* practitioners but are skillfully used for their intended purpose.
5. Scholarship should be revived. *Newār Buddhist* had a glorious past of having sound scholarship. Learning and teaching habit should be once again

inculcated in *Newār Buddhist*. *Saṅgha* should encourage their *saṅgha* members for study and some sort of facilities should be given to them like study grant. Now, there are several colleges conducting course on *Buddhist* studies. After the establishment of Lumbini *Buddhist* University, *Buddhist* learning ground has become wider.

6. Conferring ordination to the infants should be stopped. In other words, treating the ordination program only as rite de passage should be avoided. It should be taken in real sense of making monks. A rule should be promulgated that for the ordination the neophyte should be in the age between 8 to 15 so that they are in the condition of knowing what is going on and feel the responsibility.
7. And, before conferring ordination the neophytes should be taught about basic *Buddhist* teachings. Only those who have taken the course of basic *Buddhist* teaching for certain period at least two to three months, they be treated eligible for ordination. The respective *saṅgha* should conduct and monitor such training program.
8. There is a losing trend of dwelling monastics in the monasteries. Previously all the members of monastery *saṅgha* lived within the monastery compound. The members of a given *saṅgha* are now widely scattered beyond the periphery of monastery, sometimes too far away, resulting in the breakdown of the closely knit monastery community. They should be encouraged to reside in the monasteries. Monastery property should be inherited to those members only who could take up their duties seriously. And selling property to non monastics should be stopped.
9. *Bare* (the monastics) should maintain their status as they continued to recognize and employ a body of symbols relating to the traditional monastic apparatus. They need to justify ideologically their superior ritual and class status. They also need to validate their priestly class while they retain their identity as *Buddhist* monastics. They should justify their status behaviorally on their claim that they alone have right to reside in and to control the religious apparatus of present day *Newār* monasteries because they are the descendants of their former *Buddhist* monks; that they should be at the top of

- the caste hierarchy because they are the ones who come closest to approximately the life of the *Buddhist* monks; that they alone among present day *Newārs* have the shaven heads at religious occasions and are the occupants of monasteries; that they alone have attempted to follow the path of the *Buddha*; that they allow their maximum time in *dharma* practice, and that they alone have earned a degree of spirituality because they alone have been ordained as *Buddhist* monks.
10. In the past, *Tibetans* learned from *Newār Buddhists* about the *Buddhist* doctrine and practice. Now, it's time for *Newārs* to learn from *Tibetans* who gained greater international exposure. They should not hesitate in so doing. This will also help the great global revival of their faith: by extending the *Dharma* to all humans in the world, *Tibetan Buddhism* has benefited greatly. *Tibetan lāmās* now lead a global tradition with *viḥāras* in nearly every country of the world. The *Newār saṅgha* should not keep their faith to itself any more. *Newār Buddhists* lack connections with sincere non-*Newārs* who wish to learn about their *Mahāyāna/Vajrayāna* tradition in Nepalese way.
  11. *Newār Buddhists* should carefully consider whether it is better to blindly hold on to their old traditions or to make the changes needed so that their grandchildren will still have a living culture of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* to guide their lives. Now, *Newār Buddhism* should reach out to all including locals and foreigners if its motto is benefitting others as per *Buddhist* tenets. For the *Newār Mahāyāna* community, it is not time to hold back the concealments of the tradition within only *Newār* monastic community. This is a big challenge for *Newār* monasticism for its survival in future. Only by looking outward and connecting with the outside world beyond boundary *Newār Buddhists* can revive their *Mahāyāna* faith.
  12. New monasteries ceased to be constructed. There is no new construction of monastery in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. All the existing monasteries are old and were constructed in ancient or medieval time. Effort should be made to construct new monasteries allowing all fresh restart. This will create new zeal and enthusiasm in *Newār* monasticism. Religious people have always found it most effective to attempt change by acting together, not as isolated individuals. *Newār Buddhist* must create a new institution that will focus the

energy of reform, devotional practice, patronage, and learning. While this institution must find widespread support in the community and attract its funds they should convince the old elders. Once a new monastery is established, following tasks should be carried out from the new institution.

- (i) Monastic Education and Practice should be taught in the new monastery. There is no organization to oversee uniformity of *Buddhist* practice except *Ācārya Guthi* of Kathmandu. Rituals are taught to young *Vajrācāryas/Śākyas* by their fathers or uncles or by learned teachers chosen for the purpose. Doctrine is only taught in an *ad hoc* way so that the practicing priest can answer casual questions about the rituals asked by the laity. The laity receives no explicit teaching on doctrine. Laymen and women, particularly women, are taught by their mothers to make basic offerings. All other learning is a matter of personal choice. The new *vihāra* will support a core of devout and learned young Buddhist masters to study, practice, and connect their tradition with the modern world. The new *vihāra* must offer incentives for practicing *Vajrācāryas* to retain and extend their learning about both *Dharma* and ritual so as to regain the lay community's respect. A new earned title must be created by the learned *Newār saṅgha* elders, a kind of degree like *Tibetan "Geshe"* that would announce an individual's status as master of major rituals, meditation, and the *Navadharma* texts.
- (ii) Opportunity of learning *Buddhist* teachings should be open to all and there should be uniformity in teaching which can be brought about by the new institution at the new *vihāra*. The new *vihāra* must be dedicated to reviving learning tradition within the traditional *Mahāyāna saṅgha* that reaches out to the wider community.
- (iii) The new *vihāra* must convince existing groups of traditional *Newār Buddhism* - local *saṅghas*, *Vajrācārya Samrakṣan Guthi*, the *De Ācārya Guthi*, *Śākya samāj*, *Urāya samāj* etc., that some practices simply must be changed to cope with modern age. They must win over the favour of existing groups elaborating that some changes must be incorporated in their system and only new *vihāra* institute can take the initiatives.

- (iv) The new *vihāra* could also begin a publication in *Newārī* and English to publicize its work locally and internationally.
- (v) The new *vihāra* could organize a yearly tour by certified *vajrācārya* masters who would visit *Newār Buddhist* families residing abroad, mainly the United States. These NRN expatriate *Newārs* have no way to fulfill their traditional *Buddhist* ritual obligations like *saṃskāras*, *vratas* etc., especially for their children, and they could sponsor the tour. While meeting the need for these rituals, and giving *Buddhist* lessons, the visiting *Buddhist* masters could also raise *dāna* funds for the new *vihāra* institution in Kathmandu.
- (vi) *Pañcadān* festival is observed annually when the monastics-*Vajrācārya* and *Śākyas* are venerated for carrying out monks' role and offered cash and materials. *Pañcadān* offerings should be directed for the construction of new *vihāra* in *Nepal-maṇḍala*. A good example of this and overwhelming response have been already witnessed that led to construction of traditional Nepalese monastery at Lumbini. This practice of channeling proper use of offering collected in mass during festivals should be continued.

13. To make the changes needed to uphold *Newār* monasticism, *Newārs* need to study the modern world and make changes in some of the older practices. *Newār* monastic tradition has the practice of allowing the most elderly men to be group leaders. However much they owe respect to elders, they must also admit the truth that today the oldest are not usually the best informed group or most highly motivated individuals to make changes for the long-term betterment of the *Dharma*. Thus, while preserving a sincere regard and ceremonial veneration for elders, it is the younger generations of *Buddhist* householders who must make both wise and decisive changes. Therefore, young generations should be encouraged to take initiatives.

Now it is the time for *Theravādin* and *Tibetan Buddhist* practitioners residing in Nepal to repay for support or good sentiment shown by *Newār Buddhists* during their difficult time by helping traditional Nepalese *Buddhism* to sustain well in this modern age. *Theravādins* should get rid of the thought that unless *Newār Buddhism*



is criticized they will not get followers from *Newār* community. Likewise, adherents of *Tibetan Buddhism* should avoid the view that now they have become self-reliant after getting international fan flowing and they no more have to depend upon *Newār Buddhists* of Kathmandu valley. *Tibetan Buddhist* masters could contribute a lot as there is a conspicuous lacking of famed scholars and renowned practitioners in *Newār Buddhism* and a few present is not visible for several reasons. It is quite reasonable for them to do something for uplift of *Newār Buddhism* as they are living now in Nepal. But their reimbursement or repay is still due. Their reciprocation is not adequately seen. This is the case not only with *Newār Buddhism* but also with local Himalayan *Buddhism*. *Tibetan Buddhists* are well informed of *Buddhism* of Northern Nepal. People of Northern Nepal practice *Buddhism* influenced by *Tibetan* type due to their geographical proximity with Tibet. There are more than 3000 *gompās* scattered in Northern Nepal. It is felt that *Tibetan lāmās* have less activities for Nepalese *Buddhists* of Northern Nepal. Their activities are mostly centralized in gaining international limelight and international support. As a result, there appeared two separate communities (1) those following *Tibetan Buddhism* led by *Tibetan lāmās* having attractive colossal monasteries with modern facilities and international support and (2) those following *Tibetan* influenced local Himalayan *Buddhism* led by local Nepalese *lāmās* with dilapidated village monasteries, devoid of any support, in poverty and destitute. It would be better if these two groups could be one.

Both groups (*Theravādins* and *Tibetans*) must not forget their time of struggle in the past and the co-operation received from *Newār Buddhists* who had their own system of monasticism. It does not mean that they always had nice experience from *Newār Buddhists*, there had been some exceptional cases of disputes in the history when traditional *Newār Buddhist* adherents took alternative path in the beginning. But, such cases could be deemed less important in terms of laudable support received from *Newār Buddhists*. One should not forget that such disputes of beginning were ousted by the *Newār Buddhists* themselves allowing pavement of way to alternatives. Both *Theravāda* and *Tibetan Buddhist* traditions which separately coexisted with local *Buddhism* should adore traditional *Newār Buddhists* and assist them for survival of their *Buddhism*. It is good to see prosperity of *Theravāda* and *Tibetan Buddhism* and its adherents in Nepal. But it would be better if they consider for *Newār Buddhism* with which they owed. They should not forget that *Newār Buddhists* provided them platform for their existence in Nepal

providing suitable *Buddhist* environment and readymade followers. Only *Newār Buddhists* had kept *Buddhism* vibrant and lively throughout the *Buddhist* history from *Sākyamuni Buddha* to present day in Nepal. Only this tradition had carried the sum total history of *Buddhism*. And repaying kindness is regarded best meritorious deed in *Buddhism*.

It is felt during the study that a lot more has yet to be explored about Nepalese *Buddhism* and monasticism to reveal hidden historical facts. Present work is only an attempt in this regard. It seems history of Nepalese *Buddhism* is yet to be properly written. Foreign scholars mostly wrote from anthropological perspectives which depended hugely upon the local informants in their contact only. They might not have approached the right practitioners. Information given by untrained and stray guides may mislead the tourists. Nepalese writers showed tendency of following the same versions repeatedly without verification in writing history of *Buddhism* in Nepal. Some instances can be cited here as the cases of (1) *Theravāda* existence in Nepal (2) transformation of celibate monks into householder monks and castes, and (3) status of *Śākyas*.

Late establishment of *Theravāda* tradition in Nepal is till now considered revival by every historian. But the study reveals that it was not the revival but totally a new introduction to Nepal. There is lack of ground and justification to call it revival. To be revival it should have existed before. There is no proof of past existence of *Theravāda* in Nepal. Writers often assume *Hinayāna* (Lesser vehicle) whose presence with *Mahāyāna* in *Nepal-maṇḍala* was mentioned by Hiuen tsang (629-646) in his travel account, to be *Theravāda*. But it was known to be *Sarvāstivāda* that he meant, it so reveals from Indian History and several evidences in Nepal. Another base of such assumption is finding of four folios of *Pāli* literature which was now in possession of National Archive. How can one make such an injudicious assumption of *Theravāda* presence based on finding of just four pages of *Pāli* script ignoring a huge collection of *Buddhist Saṃskṛit* literature which was never the basis of *Theravāda*. There was no practice of copying *Pāli* manuscript as it was seen for *Saṃskṛit*. Likewise, either Śāṅkarācārya or Jayasthitimalla was blamed to have forced celibate monks to lead caste styled married householder life. There are several similar versions with slight variation written in history of Nepalese *Buddhism* by different writers. These two personalities were considered the main players bringing about major changes in

Nepalese monasticism mainly the transformation of celibate monkhood to married householder monkhood. But study reveals presence of householder monks in *Nepal-maṇḍala* before their period. Therefore their role in transformation of monasticism is not confirmed. Another example of less established conviction is about the status of *Śākya*. *Śākyas* take pride to be of *Buddha*'s clan. At the same time they also claim that they were *Śākyabhikṣus* before and some still prefer to use *Śākyabhikṣu* to dignify their status. But the study discloses that if they were *Śākyabhikṣu*, they were *Mahāyāna bhikṣu*. Anybody could become *Śākyabhikṣu* by being *Mahāyāna bhikṣu*. Therefore not all *Śākyas* are *Buddha*'s clan as they claim. But this fact is hardly mentioned in Nepalese history written so far yet. History is to reveal truth. Further research is required to settle the issues and to bring about the facts. Nepalese *Buddhism* is yet full of fantasy, hearsays and fabrication. It is also felt that to know the history of *Buddhist* tradition in Nepal, thorough study of History of *Buddhism* in India and Tibet is required. The present study is limited to monasticism in *Nepal-maṇḍala* in tracing the changes in its continuity. It is hoped that this proves to be a new beginning to encourage further research in the field.

## References

- Ahir, D.C. *The Status of the Laity in Buddhism, Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica Series No.171*, (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, A Division of Indian books Centre, 1996)
- Akira, Hirakawa. *A History of Indian Buddhism, from Śākyamuni to Early Mahāyāna*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 2007 Reprint)
- Amritananda. *Buddhakālīn Grihasthīharu (Householders in Budha's time)*, Part 1, (Kathmandu: Ānandakuṭī Vidyāpīṭha, 1972)
- , *Buddhakālīn Grihasthīharu (Householders in Budha's time)*, Part 2, (Kathmandu: Ānandakuṭī Vihar Guthi, 1978)
- , *Buddhakālīn Grihasthīharu (Householders in Budha's time)*, Part 3, (Kathmandu: Ānandakuṭī Vihar Guthi, 1979)
- Anandakaushalyayan, Bhadanta. *Pāli Hindi Kośa*, (Nagpur: Sugat Prakashan Co., 1989)
- Bagchi, S. *Mūlasarvāstivādinayavastu, Vol. 1*, (Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1967)
- Bajracharya, Amogh Bajra. *Lokeśworyā Parichaya (Introduction to Lokeśworyā)*, (Kathmandu: Lokeśwor Saṅgha, N.S. 1999)
- Bajracharya, Ashakaji (Ganesharaj). *Tārā Pārājikā*, (Yala, Lalitpur: Pt. Vaidya Ashakaji, 2043 B.S)
- , *Bungadyo Nepale Bijyākugu Khan (A Story relating to visit of Bungama-Lokeswara to Nepal)*, (*Nepal Bhāṣāyā Vamśāvalī Maniratnamālāyā Chagu Anśa*), (Lalitpur: Saroj Bajracharya, 5<sup>th</sup> reprint, 2051 B.S)
- , *Bodhisattvāvadānamālā*, Part III, (Kathmandu: Nepal Baudha Prakashan, N.S. 1105),

- , *The Daśakarma Vidhi*, (Kathmandu: Maṇḍala Book Point, 2010)
- Bajracarya, Badri Ratna. *Cūdākarma vidhāna*, (Kathmandu: Vajrācārya Saṁrakṣaṇ Guṭhī, 2030 B.S.)
- , *Śrī Svayambhū Mahāpurāṇa*, (Kathmandu: Sanumaya Tuladhar, 1103 N.S)
- , *Buddhisim of Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Ananda Kuti Vihāra Trust, 1986)
- , *Nepalya Boudha Dharmay Daśakarma Saṁskāra Dharma (Fulfilment of Ten Sacraments in Buddhism of Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Mrs. Mahili Bajracharya, Itum Bāhā, 2061 B.S)
- Bajracharya, Badriratna, Ratnakaji Bajracharya. *Nepal Jana-Jīvan KriyāPaddhati (Action Manual for Life-style in Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Badriratna, Ratnakaji Bajracharya, )
- Bajracharya, Bhadra Ratna. *Dhana Vajra Bajracharya ko Aitihāsika Lekha Saṁgraha (Collection of Historical articles of Dhana Vajra Bajracharya)*, Part I, (Lalitpur: Lalit Research Centre, 2056)
- (ed.), *Kwopaya Bāhā Bahi, Buddhist Monasteries of Bhaktapur*, (Kwopa: Maitreya Yuva Saṅgha, 2004)
- Bajracharya, Dhanavajra. *Licchavī Kālko Abhilekha (Inscriptions of Licchavī period)*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, (Kathmandu: CNAS, 2053 B.S)
- , *Madhyakālakā Abhilekha (Inscriptions of Medieval period)*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Ra Ashiyāli Anusandhān Kendra, CNAS, 2056 B.S)
- , *Gopalrājvaṁśavalīko Aitihāsika Vivechana (Historical Analysis of Gopalraj-chronicle)* (Kathmandu: Nepal Ra Ashiyāli Anusandhān Kendra, 2064 B.S)
- , *Pūrvamadhyakālakā Abhilekha (Inscriptions of Early Medieval Period)*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Ra Ashiyāli Anushandhan Kendra, CNAS, 2068 B.S)

- Bajracharya, Dhanavjara and Kamal P. Malla. *The Gopālrājavaṃśāvalī*, (Kathmandu: Franz Verlag Wiesbaden GmbH, 1985)
- Bajracharya, Dharmasunder. *Thimi Deyā Bāhā wa Vajrācārya Saṅgha* (*Monasteries and Vajrācārya Saṅgha of Thimi*), (Thimi: Madhyapur Thimi VajrācāryaSaṅgha, 2004)
- Bajracharya, Divyavajra (Tr.). *Śikṣā Samuccaya* of Śāntideva, unpublished, (Kathmandu: Lotus Research Centre)
- Bajracharya, Dunda Bahadur (Tr.). *The Samyukta Nikāya, Third Book of Sutta Pitaka-The kindred Sayings of the Buddha given in Nepal Bhāṣā*, (Lalitpur: Pavitra Bahadur, Ashok Ratna, Hira Devi Bajracharya, Bir-Purna Pustak Sangrahālaya, 1999)
- (Tr.). *Milindapanha*, (Lalitpur: Pavitra Bahadur Bajracharya, Ashok Ratna Bajracharya, Hera Devi Bajracharya, Bīr Pūrṇa Pustak Saṅgrahālaya, 1999)
- Bajracharya, Herakaji. *Lalitpur Baudha Vihāra -Yalayā Boudha Vihāra, Samshipta Parichaya* (*Short Introduction to Buddhist Monasteries of Lalitpur*), (Lalitpur: Baudha VihāraSaṅgha, 2000 AD)
- Bajracharya, Madansen. *De Ācārya Guṭhī, Buddhist Council of Bajracharyas, Tradition and Necessity*, (Kathmandu: Rajendra Man Bajracharya, Bajracharya Samarakshana Guṭhī, Sahityapala, ŚrīkhandaTarumulVihāra, 1999)
- Bajracharya, Munindra Ratna. *Nepal's Four Famous Karuṇāmaya Lokeśwor*, (Kathmandu: Padma Harsha Bajracharya, 2002),
- Bajracharya, Naresh Man. *Buddhism in Nepal*, (Delhi: Eastern Book Linkers, 1998)
- , *Pañca Buddha*, (Kathmandu: Tulratna Bajracharya & Padmakeshari Bajracharya, 2003 AD)

---, *Vajrayān Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Triratna Prakāshan, 2012),

Bajracharya, Phanindra Ratna. *Baudha Stotra Sangraha (Collection of Buddhist hymns)*, in Nepalbhāsā, (Kathmandu: Ashananada Swadharma Vihar, N.S. 1123)

Bajracharya, Ratnakaji and Vijayaratna Bajracharya. *Nepā:deyā Vihārayā Tā:chā-Key to Vihāras in Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Ratnakaji, Vijayaratna Bajracharya, 1983)

Bajracharya, Ratnakaji (Ed.), *Pulāngu wa Nhugu Cacā Munā (Collection of Old and New Caryā songs)*, Part I, (Kathmandu: Vridhri Man Shakya and Badri Man Shakya, 1996)

---, *Pulāngu wa Nhugu Cacā Munā (Collection of Old and New Caryā songs)* Part II, (Kathmandu: Vridhri Man Shakya and Badri Man Shakya, 1999)

Bajracharya, Saddharmaraj(Tr). *Ācārya Kriyāsamuccaya*, unpublished, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 2062),

Bajracharya, Surendra Man. *Buddhist Heritage of Northern Nepal-An Introduction*, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 2008)

Banerjee, Anukul Chandra. *Sarvāstivāda Literature*, (Calcutta: The World Press Pvt. Ltd., 1979)

Bapat, P.V. (Ed.). *2500 Years of Buddhism*, 6<sup>th</sup> Reprint, (New Delhi: Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, 1997)

Baroni, Helen J. *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Zen Buddhism*, (New York: The Rosen Publishing Group Inc., 2002)

Bechert, Heinz(ed.) and Richard Gombrich(ed.), *The World of Buddhism, Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 1984, Reprint 2007)

- Bhandari, Dhundiraj. *Nepalko Aitihāsika Vivechana (Historical Analysis of Nepal)*, (Varanasi: Kṛṣṇakumari, 2025 B.S)
- Bhaskarananda, Swami. *Essentials of Hinduism, A Comprehensive Overview of the World's Oldest Religion*, (Seattle: Viveka Press 1994),
- Bhat M.S (Dr) and M.V. Talim(Dr), *Suttapitake-Khuddhaknikāya BUDDHAVANSO, The Genealogy of the Buddhas*, (Bombay, University of Bombay, 1969)
- Bhattacharya, Benoytosh. *Indian Buddhist Iconography*, (Calcutta: K.L. Mukhopadhyaya, 1968)
- (ed.). *Nispannayogāvalī*, (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1972)
- , *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1980)
- Bhattacharya, J.N. & Nilanjana Sarkar (Ed.), *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Sanskrit Literature Vol. 1*, A-Dh, (Delhi: Global Vision Publishing House, 2004)
- Bista, Dor Bahadur. *People of Nepal*, 7<sup>th</sup> Edition, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2000)
- Budathoki, Chandra Bikram. *Sthiti Mallako Sudhār (Reformation by Sthiti Malla)*, (Kathmandu: Sajha Prakashan, 2039 B.S)
- Chattopadhyaya, Debiprasad, (Ed.), *Tārānātha's History of Buddhism in India*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, Reprint 1997),
- Chen, Huaiyu. *The Revival of Buddhist Monasticism in Medieval China*, (New York: Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 2007)
- Chryssides, G.D. *Exploring New Religions*, (London: Casell, 1999)
- Conze, Edward. *A Short History of Buddhism*, (New Delhi: Research Press, 1999)



- , *Buddhism, its essence and development*, (New Delhi: Rupa & Co., 2005, first print 1951))
- Cook, Elizabeth(Ed.) and Yeshe De Research Project: '*Light of Liberation*', *A History of Buddhism in India*, Crystal mirror Series Vol.VIII, (Berkeley, Dharma Publishing, 1992)
- Das, Sarat Chandra. *Indian Pandits in the Land of Snow*, (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1992)
- Daswani, Rekha. *Buddhist Monasteries and Monastic Life in Ancient India, (From the Third Century BC to the Seventh Century AD)*, (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 2006)
- Dayal, Har. *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Saṅskṛit Literature*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Reprint 2004)
- de Jong, J.W. "The Study of *Buddhism*: Problems and Perspectives," *Studies in Indo- Asian Art and Culture*, Vol. IV, ed. Perala Ratnam, (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1975)
- , *A Brief History of Buddhist Studies in Europe and America*, (Tokyo: Koosei Publishing Company, 1997),
- Dhammananda, K. Sri. *The Dhammapada*, (Kuala Lumpur: Sasana Ahiwurthi Warthana Society, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reprint 1992)
- Dhammavati (Anagarika). *Saṅkṣipta Buddha Vaṃśa*, (A Short Buddha Dynasty), Part I & II, (Kathmandu, Dharma Kirti Baudha Adhyayana Gosthi, 1997)
- Dhijwati (Kusum Gurumā). *Saṅkṣipta Buddha Vaṃśa*, (A Short Buddha Dynasty), (Lalitpur: Moti Lal Shilpakar family, 2041)
- Dreyfus, George B.J. *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping: The Education of a Tibetan Buddhist Monk*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003)

Dunn, Marilyn J. *The emergence of Monasticism: From the Desert Fathers to the Early Middle Ages*, (London: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002)

Dutta, Nalinaksha. *Buddhist Sects in India*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1978, Reprint 1998)

Dutt, Sukumar. *Early Buddhist Monachism*, (New Delhi: Munsiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996)

---, *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India: Their History and Their Contribution to Indian Culture*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2000)

Elder, George R. (Ed.), *Buddhist Insight-Essays by Alex Wayman*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Pvt, Ltd., 2002)

Elenjimitam, Anthony, *Monasticism: Christian and Hindu Buddhist*, (Virginia: Brother Juseph for Aquinus Publication, The University of Virginia, 1969)

Encyclopedia Britannica, *Britanica Ready Reference Encyclopedia*, Vol. 7, (New Delhi: Encyclopedia Britannica (India) Pvt. Ltd. And Impulse Marketing, 2005)

Farrow, G.W. and I. Menon. *The concealed Essence of the Hevajra Tantra*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, 1992),

*The Encyclopaedia Britanica*, Vol. 12, (Chicago: Helen Hemingway Benton, 1978.)

Gard, Richard A. (Ed.), *Buddhism*, (CT: Konecky & Konecky, 1961)

Geiger, Wilhelm. *The Mahāvamsā*, (Colombo: The Ceylon Government Information Department, 1950),

- Gellner, David N. *Monk, Householder, and Tāntric Priest: Newār Buddhism and Its Hierarchy of Ritual*, (London: Cambridge University Press, published in India by Foundation Books, New Delhi 1996)
- , *The Anthropology of Buddhism & Hinduism, Weberian Themes*, (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), P. 134
- Gokhale, B. G. *New Light on Early Buddhism*, (Bombay: Popular Prakashan, 1994)
- Gombrich, Richard F. *Buddhist precept and Practice*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, Reprint 2008)
- , *Theravāda Buddhism, A Social history from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo* (London: 1988)
- Gutschow, Neil. *The Nepalese Caitya, 1500 Years of Buddhist Votive Architecture in the Kathmandu Valley*, (Stuttgart/London: Edition Axel Menges, 1997)
- Gyawali, Surya Vikram. *Nepal Upatyekāko Madhyakālin Itihāsa -879 to 1768 CE (Medieval History of Nepal Valley-879 to 1768)*, (Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy, 2019 B.S.)
- Hardy, R. Spence. *EASTERN MONACHISM, An Account of the origin, laws, Disciplines, Sacred Writings, Mysterious rites, Religious Ceremonies, and Present Circumstances of the Order of Mendicants founded by Gotama Buddha and Review of Monastic System*, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860)
- Harvey, Peter. *An Introduction to BUDDHISM: Teaching, history and practices, South Asian Edition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Reprinted 2005)
- Hastings, James A. Selbei, *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, Part 24 (Edinburg: T &T Clark, 1932)

Hazra, Kanai Lal. *Constitution of the Buddhist Saṅgha*, (Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1988)

Hodgson, Brian H. *Essays on the Languages, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet*, (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1991, first published by Trubner & Co., 57 & 59 Ludgate Hill, London, 1874)

Hornby A S. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.)

Horner, I.B. (trans.), *The Book of the Discipline (Vināya-Pitaka)*, Vol. V Cullavagga, (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1963)

---, *The Book of the Disciplines (Vinaya Pitaka)*, Vol. I, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1992),

---, *The Book of the Disciplines (Vinaya Pitaka)*, Vol. IV, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 1993),

Huntington, John C., Dina Wangdel and Robert AF Thurman. *The Circle of Bliss*, (Chicago, Serindia Publication Inc., 2003)

Jacobi, Hermann. "Jainism" in *Cultural and Religious Heritage of India*, Vol. 2 (New Delhi: Mittal publication, 2004)

Jayawickrama, N.A. *Sutta Nipāt*, Text and Translation, (Kelaniya: Post graduate Institute of Pāli & Buddhist Studies, University of Kelaniya, 2001),

Johnson, William M. & Claire Renkin (Ed.). *Encyclopedia of Monasticism*, (Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 2000)

Joshi. Hariran .R., *Mediaeval Colophons*, Vol. I, (Lalitpur: Joshi Research Institute, 1991)

Kern, H. *Manual of Indian Buddhism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1989)

- Knowles, David. *The Monastic Order in England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)
- Kohn, Livin. *Monastic Life in Medieval Daoism: A Cross-cultural Perspective*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2003)
- Korn, Wolfgang P. *The Traditional Architecture of the Kathmandu Valley*, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1998)
- Lall, Kesar. *The Newār Merchants in Lhasa*, (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2001)
- Lamotte, Etienne. *Surangāmāsamādhisūtra, The concentration of Heroic Progress, An Early Mahayana Buddhist Scripture*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 2003)
- Law, Bimala Churn. *A Study of Mahāvastu*, (Calcutta & Simla: Thacker, Spink & Co, 1930)
- Levi, Sylvian. *Le Nepal, I*, (New Delhi: India Asian Educational Services 1990)
- Lewis, Todd T. “The Tuladhars of Kathmandu: A Study of Buddhist Tradition in a Newār Merchant Community” Columbia University: Ph.D. Dissertation, 1984, (Michigan: University Microfilm International, 1987)
- Lewis, Todd. L. *Popular Buddhist Texts from Nepal: Narratives and Rituals of Newār*, (Albany: State University of New York, 2000)
- Locke, John K. *Karuṇāmaya, The Cult of Avlokiteswara-Matsyendranātha in the Valley of Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Prakashan for CNAS, 1980)
- , ‘*Buddhist Monasteries of Kathmandu Valley*’, (Kathmandu, Sahayogi Press, 1985)
- Majumdar, Gayatri Sen. *Buddhism in Ancient Bengal*, (Calcutta: Navana, 1983)

- Malla, Kamal Prakasha and Dhanavajra Vajracharya (ed), *The Gopālrāj Vamśāvali*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Research Centre, 1985)
- McGregor, R.S. *The Oxford Hindi-English Dictionary*, (U.SA: Oxford University Press, 5th ed. 1999)
- Mehta, J.L. *Advanced Study in the History of Medieval India (Vol. I: 1000 – 1526 A.D.)*, Reprint 1983, (New Delhi: Sterling Puvlishers Pvt. Ltd., 1979)
- Michaels, Axel. *Hinduism, Past and Present* (New Delhi, Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., 2004)
- Mitra, Rajendra Lal. *The Sanskrit Buddhist Literature of Nepal*, (Calcutta: Sanskritik Pustak Bhandar, 1882)
- Mukharjee, Radhakumuda. *Aśoka*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1974)
- Nakamura, Hajime. *Indian Buddhism*, (Dehi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, Reprint 2007),
- Narada, *The Dhammapada*, (Colombo: B.M.S Publication, 1978)
- Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, (Kuala Lumpur: Buddhist Missionary Society, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition, 1988)
- Nagao, Gadjin, “The Architectural Tradition in *Buddhist Monasticism*” in A.K. Narain(Ed.), *Studies in History of Buddhism*, (Delhi: Buddhist World press, 2010)
- Narain, A.K. (Ed.), *Studies in History of Buddhism*, (Delhi: Buddhist World press, 2010)
- Nattier, Jan. *THE BODHISATTVA PATH, Based on Ugraparipṛcchā, a Mahāyāna Sūtra*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Private Limited, First Indian Edition 2007)

Negi, Ramesh Chandra (Tr. & Ed and restored). *Atishaviracita Akadasha-grantha* (Varanasi: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1992)

Nepal, Gyan Mani. *Nepalko Pūrvamadhyakālko Itihāsa (Early Medieval History of Nepal)*, (Kirtipur: CNAS, 2054 B.S.)

--- , *Nepalko Mādhyāmika Kālko Itihāsa (Medieval History of Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Makalu Books & Stationers, 2062 B.S)

Nepali, Chittaranjan, Dineshraj Panta *et. al* (Ed.). *Nepalko Itihasika Vividha Paksha (Different Historical Aspects of Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Rajakiya Pragya Pratisthan, B.S. 2058)

Nepali, Gopal Singha. *The Newārs*, (Kathmandu: Himalayan Book sellers, Reprint 1988, 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 1965)

Nyanaponika & Hellmuth Hecker, *Great Disciples of the Buddha- Their live, Their works, Their Legacy*, (Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 2003)

Oldfield, H. Ambrose *Sketches From Nipal*, (Delhi: Cosmo Publications, reprint 1974, first published in 1880)

--- , *Sketches From Nipal* Vo. II; (Delhi: Cosmo Publications, reprint 1974, first published in 1881)

Pal, Pratapaditya (ed.). *Nepal, Old images, New insights*, (Mumbai: Marg Publications, 2004),

Pande, Govinda Chandra. *Boudha Dharma Ke Vikāsh kā Itihasa (History of Development of Buddhism)*, (Lukhnow: Uttara Pradesh Hindi Sansthan, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, 1990)

Petech, Luciano. *Medieval History of Nepal, C. 750-1482*, (ROMA: Istituto Itallano Per II. Medio Ed Estremo Oriente, 1984) pp. 40-43

- Piyadassi, Thera. *The Buddha's Ancient Path*, (United kingdom: Rider & Company, 1964; Srilankan 3<sup>rd</sup> Impression reprinted and donated by The Corporate Body of the *Buddha* Eduaction Foundation, Taiwan, 1987)
- Piyadassi, Mahāthera. *The Spectrum of Buddhism- Writings of Piyadassi*, (Taipei: The Corporate Body of the *Buddha* Educational Foundation, 1991)
- Pradhan, Bhuvan Lal. *Nepalmā Boudhadharma (Buddhism in Nepal)*, (2045 B.S.)
- Pradhan, Bhuvan Lal. *Kathmandu Upatyakākā kehi Saṃskritik Chirkā- Mirkā (Some Cultural Colours of Kathmandu Valley)*, (Kathmandu: Dr. Sunita Manandhar Gurung, 2007)
- Prebish, Charles S. "Early History of the *Buddhist* Order" in Charles S. Prebish (ed.). *Buddhism, a modern perspective*, (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1995)
- Prebish, Charles S. *Buddhist Monastic Disciplines- The Saṃskrit Prakṛtimokṣa Sūtras of Mahāsaṃghikas and Mūlasarvāstivādins*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasi Das Publishers, 1996)
- Rahula, Walpola. *What the Buddha Taught*, (New York, Grove Press, 1974)
- Ram, Rajendra. *A History of Buddhism in Nepal: A.D 704 – 1396*, (Patna: Janabharati Prakashana, 1977)
- Ranjitkar, Junu Basukala. *Pañcadān Festival of Bhaktapur* (Kathmandu: Nhuja Guṭhī Samāj, Boudha Adhyayan Samāj & Bhaktapur Vikāś Sahayog Saṅgha, 2007)
- Ratnam, Perala. (ed.) *Studies in Indo-Asian Art and Culture*, Vol. IV, (New Delhi: International Academy of Indian Culture, 1975)
- Regmi, D. R. *Ancient Nepal*, (Calcutta: K.L Mukhopadhyaya, 1960)
- , *Medieval Nepal* (4 partys), (Calcutta: Firma K.L. Mukhopadhyay, 1965),



- , *Medieval Nepal Part I: Early Medieval Period 750 -1530 AD*, (New Delhi: Rupa & Co. 2007)
- Regmi, Jagadish Chandra. *Nepalko Dhārmika Itihāsa- Prāchin Ra Mallakāla* (*Religious History of Nepal- Ancient and Malla period*), (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2037 B.S)
- , *Historical Glimpses of Nepal Buddhism*, (Kathmandu: Nepal Antiquary, 2004)
- Roerich, George N., *The Blue Annals*, (New Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1996)
- Roerich, George N., *Biography of Dharmaswamin* (Chag-Lotsaba Chos-rje-dPal), (Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Institute, 1959),
- Santideva, translated by Cecil Bendall and W.H.D Rouse, *Śikṣāsamuccaya- A Compendium of Buddhist Doctrines*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers, Reprint 1999) P. 270
- Santina, Peter Della. *The Tree of Enlightenment*, (Taiwan: Chico Dharma Study Foundation, The Corporate Body of the *Buddha* Educational Foundation, 1997)
- Sarkar, S.C. “*Role of The Sarvāstivāda Narrative Literature in Shaping the Vinaya rules*” in Prof .Saṅghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition*, (Delhi: Department of *Buddhist* Studies, Delhi University, 1994)
- Schade, Johannes P. *Encyclopedia of World Religions*, (New York: Foreign Media Group, 2006)
- Schmidt-Leukel, Perry. *Understanding Buddhism*, (New Delhi: Pentagon Press, 2007)
- Senart Emile.( Ed.). *Le Mahavastu*, V2, (1890), (Montana: Kessinger Publishing LLC)

- Scophen, Gregory. *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997)
- Scophen, Gregory. *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters, Still More Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India*, (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004)
- Slusser, Merry Shepherd. '*Nepal Maṇḍala, A cultural Study of the Kathmandu Valley*', Princeton University, 1982
- Shah, Rishikesh. *Ancient and Medieval NEPAL*, (New Dehi: Manahar Publishers & Distributers, 1992)
- Shakya, Harshamuni. *Buddhadharmako Vikaśamā Shākyaharuko den, (Contribution of Shakyas in the expansion of Buddhism)*, (Kathmandu: The Shakya Foundation, 2063 B.S)
- Sakya, Hemraj. *Nepal Baudha Vihāra wa Granthasūci (Nepal Buddhist Monasteries and Enlistment of Scriptures)*, (Kathmandu: Dharmodaya Sabha, Buddha samvat 2500)
- , Hem Raj. *Samyak Mahādāna Guṭhī*, (Kathmandu: Jagatdhar Tuladhar, B.S. 2036)
- , *Baudha Murti Chhagu Adhyayana (Buddhist Sculpture- A Study)*, (Kathmandu: Khwaspusa, 1091 N.S)
- , *Akṣeśvar Mahāvihāra Pucho, Chagu Adhyayan, A Study*, (Lalitpur, Boudha Vihāra Saṅgha, 1995)
- , *Sri Svayambhū Mahācaitya*, translated by Min Bāhādur Shakya (Kathmandu: Svayambhū Vikash Mandal, 2004)
- Shakya Hemraj & T.R. Vaidya, *Medieval Nepal (Colophons and Inscriptions)*, (Kathmandu: T.R. Vaidya, 1970)
- Shakya, Min Bahadur. '*A short History of Buddhism in Nepal*', (Kathmandu, Young Buddhist Publication, 1986)

- , *Princess BhrikutiDevi- The Life & Contribution of the Nepakese Princess Bhrikuti Devi to Tibetan History*, (Delhi: Book Faith Indua, 1997),
- Shakya, Min Bahadur & Shanta Harsha Bajracharya. *Svayambhū purāṇa*, (Lalitpur, Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Methods, 2001)
- Shakya, Tīrṭha Ratna. *Nepal Mandalaka Baudhaharuko Dharmika Abhyasha Ra Jivan Shaili (Religious Practice and Life style of Buddhists of Nepal-mandala)*, (Kathmandu: Buddhadharma Adhyayan Gosthi, 2008)
- Sharkey, Gregory. *Buddhist Daily Ritual, The Nitya Pūjā in Kathmandu Valley Shrines*, (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2001)
- Sharma, Parmananda. *Śāntideva's BODHICHARYĀVATĀRA, Original Saṅskrit Text with English Translation*, (New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reprint 2001)
- Sharma, Prayag Raj Sharma. 'Kul, Bhumi Ra Rājya; Nepal Upatyakako Purva-Madhyakālik Samajika Adhyayana (Dynasty, Land and Country- Study of Medieval Society)', (Kirtipur: CNAS, 2054 B.S)
- Swāmi Dwārikādās Śāstri, *Guhyasamājtantra or Tathāgataguhyaka*, (Varanasi: Bauddha Bharati, 2003),
- Shastri, Mahāmahopadhyaya Haraprasad (Ed.). *Advayavajra Saṁgraha*, Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. XL, (Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1927)
- Silk, Jonathan A. *Managing Monks, Administrators and Administrative Roles in Indian Buddhistmonasticism*, (New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2008)
- Singh, Harischandra Lal. *Buddhism in Nepal*, (Lalitpur: Indu Chhapakhana Pvt. Ltd., 1990)
- Singh, Mrigendra Lal. *NEWA, Who, Where, How many and When?*, (Kathmandu: Nepa Rastriya Party, 2010 )
- Singh, Renuka (Ed.). *The Path of the Buddha*, (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2004)

- Singh, Sanghasen (Ed.). *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition* (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994)
- Skorupski, Tadeusz. *Kriyāsamgraha*, (U K : The Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2002)
- Slusser, Mary Shepherd. *NEPAL MAṆḌALA*, (Kathmandu: Maṇḍala Book Point, Reprint 1998)
- Snellgrove, David. *Buddhist Himalaya*, (Kathmandu: Himalayan Book Sellers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1995, first Edition by Bruno Cassirer Publishers, 1957)
- , *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*, (London: Serindia Publications, 1987),
- Stein, M. A. *Kalhana's Rajatarangini: A Chronicle of the Kings of Kashmir*, Vol. I, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsi Das, 1961)
- Sudarshan, Bhikṣu. 'Nepalaya Bouddha Dharma (Buddhism of Nepal)', Part II, (Kathmandu: Prem Bāhādur Shakya, 2040 B.S.)
- Takakusu, J. *A Record of The Buddhist Religion as practiced in India and the Malay Archipelago (A.D. 671-695) by I-tsing*, (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1896),
- , *Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1998 first published in Honolulu, 1956)
- Tamot, Kashinatha. *Nepalmaṇḍala*, (Yala: Nepalmandala Guthi, 1126 N.S)
- Tanemura, Ryugen. *Kuladatta's Kriyā Saṁgrahapañjikā*, A critical edition and annotated translation of selected sections, (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, The Netherlands, 2004),
- Thakur, Amarnath. "Origin and Evolution of Sarvāstivāda Buddhist Sect in India" in Prof. Saṅghasen Singh (Ed.), *The Sarvāstivāda and its Tradition*, (Delhi: Department of Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, 1994) P. 178
- Thapa, Shankar. *Buddhist Monasticism in Theory and Practice*, Kathmandu: Walden Book House, 1995.)
- . 'Newār Buddhism, History, Scholarship and Literature', (Lalitpur, Nagarjuna Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2005)

- , '*Historical Context of Newār Buddhism, The Vajrayāna Tradition of Nepal*', (Lalitpur, Nagarjuna Publication Pvt. Ltd, 2005)
- (ed). *Northern Buddhism in History*, (Kathmandu: Vajra Publications, 2008)
- Tsuda, S. *The Samvarodaya-Tantra: Selected Chapters*, (Tokyo: Yokuseido Press, 1974)
- Upadhyaya, Vasudeva. *Prachin Bharatiya Stupa, Guha Abam Mandir (Ancient Indian Stupa, Caves and Temples)*, (Kadamkuwa: Vihara Hindi Academy Samaylam Bhawan, 1972)
- Vaidya, Karunakar. *Buddhist Traditions and Culture of the Kathmandu Valley (Nepal)*, (Kathmandu: Shajha Prakashan, 1986)
- Vaidya, P.L. (Ed.), *Śikṣā samuccaya of Śāntideva*, Buddhist Sanskrit Texts-No. 11, (Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute, 1961),
- Vajracharya , Pt. Nisthananda (Tr.), *Lalita vistara*, edited by Min Bahadur Shakya (Lalitpur, Young Men's Buddhist Association, 1978)
- Wadell, Austine L. *Buddhism and Lamaism of Tibet* (1894), (Kathmandu: Educational Enterprises, 1985)
- Warder, A.K. *Indian Buddhism*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Reprint 2004)
- Watters, Thomas. *On Yuan Chwang's Travel in India AD.629-645*, Vol. I & II in one bound, (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1996)
- Williams, Paul. *MAHĀYĀNA BUDDHISM, The Doctrinal Foundations*, First published 1989,(London and New York: Routledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> reprint 1991)
- Woodward, F. L. *The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara Nikāya), Vol. I*, (Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1995),
- Wright, Daniel. *History of Nepal*, (Delhi: Adarsha Enterprises, 2000 A.D)

### Journals/Research articles

- Allen, Michael. “*Buddhism without Monks: Newār Vajrayāna Buddhism of the Katmandu valley*” *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* (Series 1) Volume 3, Issue 1, published by Routledge, UK for South Asian Studies Association of Australia, 1973.
- Bajracharya, Bhadra Ratna. “Buddha Dharma Ra Lichchavikalin Samaj: Ek Adhyayan (Buddhism and *Licchavī* Society- A Study)”- a seminar paper presented at Conference on Buddhist Culture 2055, organized by Lotus Research Centre in 1998 (Kartik 15-19, 2055),
- Bajracharya, Bhadra Ratna. “Loponmukha Margonmarjangosthi (Margonmarjangosthi in the verge of Extinction)” in *VAJRAYANA*, Trimonthly, Year 1, Issue 1, November, 2009, (Kathmandu: Nepal Traditional Buddhist Association, 2009), P. 67
- Bajracharya, Hera Kaji. "Nava Granthayā Sār Who Newā Boudha Sanskriti ukiyāPrabhāva (Essence of Nava Grantha & its Effects on *Newār* Buddhist culture)” *The Lotus* (Issue 20), 2003, P. 12
- Bajracharya, Naresh Man. “Nepalko Boudha Dharma va Paramparāmā Nepal-*Maṇḍala* (Nepal-*Maṇḍala* in Buddhist Religion and Tradition)” in *A Conference on the Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandal-1998, A Report*, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 1998) – a research seminar paper presented at seminar International Conference on Buddhist Heritage of Nepal Mandal organized by Lotus Research Centre, 1998, Pp. 6-21
- Bajracarya, Yajnamanpati. “*Vajrācārya: Pulupālu (Vajrācārya: A glance)*” in *Paleswān*, Issue 13, (Lalitpur: Lotus Research Centre, 1998), Pp. 22-24
- Bangdel, Dina. “Vajrayāna Masters and Socio-religious Influence: Revitalization and Practice in contemporary *Newār Buddhism*” in Hoedang and Esoteric Buddhism, The International Conference of Korea-Srilanka, Mongolia, Nepal, Pp. 536-554
- Cohen, Richard S. “Kinsmen of the Son: *Śākya Bhikṣus* and the Institutionalization of the *Bodhisattva* ideal” in *History of Religions*, Vol.

40, No. 1, *Buddhist Art and Narrative* (Aug., 2000) pp. 1-31, published by The University of Chicago Press Stable URL: [www.jstor.org/stable/3176511](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3176511).

- Dutt, Nalinaksha. “Notes on the Nagarjunikonda Inscriptions” in *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, 7:3, 1931.09. pp 633-53
- Dutta, Nalinaksha. “*Buddhism in Nepal*” in *Bulletin of Tibetology*, Vol. 3, Number 2, Year 1966, (Gangtok: Namgyal Institute of Tibetology, 1966) pp. 27-46
- Epigraphica India, Vol. XI, New Delhi, *Archeological Survey of India*, 1981, P. 211
- Greenwold, Stephen M. “Monkhood Versus Priesthood in *Newār Buddhism*” in Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf (Ed.), *Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal*, Warminster, Aris and Phillips Ltd. 1974.
- Gurung, Narendra Kumar. "Present Situation of Nepalese Gumbas" in the souvenir magazine – *Gumba Byabastha Tatha Vikash Samitiko Samrika-7* (Souvenir-7 of Gumba Management & Development Committee 2060)
- Joshi, Hariram. “Medieval Inscriptions” in *Ancient Nepal*, Journal of the Department of Archaeology, edited by Ramesh Jung Thapa, bimonthly, No. 53-56, Aug. 79-March 1980,
- Leinhard, Siegfried. “Nepal: The Survival of Indian *Buddhism* in a Himalayan Kingdom”, in *The World of Buddhism, Buddhist Monks and Nuns in Society and Culture*, edited by Heinz Bechert and Richard Gombrich; Thames & Hudson Ltd., London, 1984, Reprint 2207,
- Locke, John K. S.J. “*Newār Buddhist initiation Rite*”, *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of The Institute of Nepal and Asian Studies, Kirtipur, Tribhuvan University, Edited by Dr. Prayag Raj Sharma (Chief Editor), and Dr. Subhadra Subba, Dhanavajra Bajracharya, A.W. Macdonald (Editorial board), Vol. II, No.2, Year 2032,

- Muhlich, Michael. “The *Newār* Vajracarya Priest as Recipient of dana”, in A. Wezler(Ed) *Journal of the Nepal Research Centre*, Vol. XI 1999 (Kathmandu: Franz Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden GmbH) pp 91-113
- Narayan, Abadha Kishor. “*Buddha Aur Bodhisattva Ki Prathama Pratimāye* (First Images of Buddha and Bodhisattvas)” in *The Indian Journal of Buddhist Studies* (Varanasi: Tara Book Agency for BJK Institute of Buddhist and Asian Studies, 1989, Year 1, Vol. 1, Issue 1) P. 67
- Parajuli Punya Prasad. “Mahāpundit Vanratnako Nepali Boudha Dharmamā Yogadān (Contribution of Mahāpundit Vanratna to Nepalese Buddhism)” in *Contributions to Nepalese Studies*, Journal of Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies, Vol. 37, No. 2, July 2010 (Kathmanu: CNAS, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, 2010) pp. 261-282
- Rospatt, Alexander von. “The Survival of *Mahāyāna Buddhism* in Nepal – A Fresh Appraisal”: in *Buddhismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart* 5. Hamburg: Universitat Hamburg (Weiterbildendes Studium), 2002,
- ---, The Transformation of the Monastic Ordination (*pravrajyā*) Into a Rite of Passage in *Newār Buddhism*, Pp.199-222,
- Shakya, Milan. “Kīrtipunya Mahāvihārako *Saṅgha* Paramparā (Sangha Tradition of Kīrtipunya Mahāvihāra)” in *Viswoshanti*, Issue 9, Year 9, (Lalitpur: Viswoshanti Pustakalaya, Buddha Samvat 2543), Pp. 83-84
- Shakya, Min Bahadur. “Historical Analysis of Monasticism in *Newār Buddhism*”, *Voice of History*, Vol. XI, No.1, Kīrtipur, 2000
- Sylvian Levi. “Le Nepal” its English translation Nepal- Historical Study of a Hindu Kingdom, in *Ancient Nepal*, a journal of Department of Archaeology, April 1973- Dec 1989 – Jan 1990), edited by Ramesh Jung thapa, P. 65
- Thomas, E. J. “The Lalitavistara and Sarvāstivāda” in *Indian Historical Quarterly* 16:2 1940.06, Pp. 239-245



- Wallis, Glenn “Advayavajra’s instructions on the *ādikarma*” in *Pacific World: Journal of the Institute of Buddhist Studies*, Fall 2003, P.20

### Report

- *Report on Newā Buddhist Culture Preservation Seminar*(In memory of late Pundit Ashakaji Bajracharya, 27 & 28 February, 1993), organized by Lotus Research centre and Nepal *Buddhist Saṅskrit* Study Centre, N.S. 1114
- Annual Report (Bārshik Pradtivedan) of Dathu Pui Ācārya *Guthī* Saṅskriti Tathā Sanrakṣan Samiti, dated 2055 B.S. Chaitra 17, Wednesday, *Lhuti Punhi*.
- *Ancient Nepal*, Journal of the Department of Archaeology, edited by Ramesh Jung Thapa, bimonthly, No. 53-56, Aug. 79-March 1980,
- *Ancient Nepal*, Number 57, April-May, 1980
- Nippon institute of technology 'The Buddhist monasteries of Nepal' – a Project Report on Renovation of Rajkirti MahaVihar, 1998

### Thesis

Bajracharya Herakaji. An Edition and Study of *PravajyāVidhi* on the basis of *KriyāSaṅgraha* Panjika of Mahā Pt. Kuladatta, a M.A thesis submitted to Central Department of *Buddhist Studies*, 2062

Bajracharya, Surendra Man. Nepal-Prime *Buddhist* Destination, a M.A thesis submitted to Central Department of *Buddhist Studies*, Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu 2062

Bajracarya, Saṅgha Ratna. Jagatpala *Mahāvihāra*: Ek Adhyayan (A study), M.A. Dissertation submitted to Central Department of *Buddhist Studies*, 2010

Ven. Paṇḍita Murti. “A Historical Study Of Pariyatti SikkhaInNepal”, M.A Thesis submitted to Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Bangkok in 2005,

### Primary sources

*Bodhisattva Pitaka*, National Archives, Kathmandu: Folio No. 106/327. P. 2

*Anguttara Nikaya* (AN 6.119 and AN 6.120)

*Kriyāsamuccayahapanjika*

*Kriyasangraha*

*Mahavagga*, I, 12, 28 at seq., 76

*Samyutta Nikāya*,

*Daśabala stotra*

*Hevajra*

### Newspaper/Magazines/Souvenir

1. *Buddha Jayanti Smārikā* published by *Buddha Jayanti Samāroha Samiti*, Kathmandu, 2063.
2. *Gorkhapatra* daily, 2018, Chaitra 2
3. *Gorkhapatra* daily, June 7, 2011 (Jestha 24, 2068) p. 7 for Munindra Ratna Bajracharya, Kumarakhasthi Arthat Sithiparva,
4. *Gumba Byabasthā Tathā Vikāsh Samitiko Smārikā-7* (Souvenir-7 of Gumba Management & Development Committee 2060)
5. *Nagarika* daily, dated May 20, 2012 (Monday, Jestha 7, 2069), under the News head- *Swayambhu* on 1500 years old Stone Inscription
6. *Pasuka*, Vol. II, No. 11, N.S. 1118

7. *Pasukā*, year 2, Vol. 10, Ashad 2055
8. '*TRI-BODHI*', Vol. III, (Kirtipur, Department of *Buddhist* Studies, 2003)
9. Map Source: Kathmandu valley base map, Kathmandu Urban Development project, Project management unit, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Babar Mahal, Kathmandu

**Internet sites:**

[http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/info:main\\_page](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/info:main_page), Retrieved 2009.8.5

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid>, Retrieved 2009.8.15

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian\\_monasticism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian_monasticism), Retrieved 2009.8.15

<http://www.religionfacts.com/Christianity/history/monasticism.htm>, Retrieved 2009.8.15

[http://www.prayerfoundation.org/brief\\_history\\_of\\_Christian\\_monasticism.htm](http://www.prayerfoundation.org/brief_history_of_Christian_monasticism.htm), Retrieved 2009.8.20

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monasticism>, Retrieved 2009.8.28

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid>, Retrieved 2009.8.15

<http://www.historyworld.net/wrldhis/PlainTextHistories.asp?groupid>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist\\_monasticism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist_monasticism), Retrieved 2009.8.28

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aśoka>, Retrieved 2009.9.20

*[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist\\_councils](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist_councils)*, Retrieved 2009.9.20

*<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avadana>*, Retrieved 2010.01.10

*<http://sectsandsectarianism.googlepages.com/mahasanghika-theearliestVinaya%3F>*, Retrieved 2010.2.18

*[www.dharmafellowship.org/library/essay](http://www.dharmafellowship.org/library/essay)*, Retrieved 2010.2.10

*([http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-ENG/tho\\_1.htm](http://ccbs.ntu.edu.tw/FULLTEXT/JR-ENG/tho_1.htm))*, Retrieved 2010.2.12

*([http://edwardbetts.com/find\\_link/Sarvāstivāda](http://edwardbetts.com/find_link/Sarvāstivāda))*, Retrieved 2009.5.15

*(<http://www.blavatskyarchives.com/reigle01.html>)*, Retrieved 2009.5.10

*<http://www.bajracharya.org/nepaliBuddhism.htm>*. Retrieved 2008-07-27.

*<http://www.forum.welovenepal.com/index.php?topic=8648.0>*, Retrieved 2010.2.1

*[http://sseas.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/faculty/files/avrospatt\\_the\\_transformation\\_of\\_the\\_monastic\\_ordination\\_into\\_a\\_rite\\_of\\_passage\\_in\\_Newār\\_Buddhism.pdf](http://sseas.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/faculty/files/avrospatt_the_transformation_of_the_monastic_ordination_into_a_rite_of_passage_in_Newār_Buddhism.pdf)*, Retrieved 2012, Dec. 23

*URL: [www.jstor.org/stable/3176511](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3176511)*, Retrieved 2012 Aug. 25

प्रणम्य श्रीगुरुन् भक्त्या जिनान (च) ससुतान अथ ।  
 आदिकर्मप्रदीपोऽयम् तदर्थिभ्यो विधियते ॥१॥  
 शिष्याणाम आशुबोधार्थम् लिख्यते स्पर्धया न तु ।  
 अतः शान्तदुःखाः सर्वे क्षन्तुम अर्हन्ति माम् प्रति ॥२॥  
 तत्रादौ देशित ये तु मन्त्राः पूजादिकर्मसु ।  
 आकृष्यैकत्र सम्पण्डे लिख्यन्ते ते तु नान्यथा ॥३॥  
 मुखशौचादिकम् कृत्वा प्रातर्ध्यानं जपं तथा ।  
 नामसंगितिपाठम् च कुर्यात् प्रणिधिमेव च ॥४॥  
 भद्रचयादिना पश्चान् नमस्कारं प्रकृत्य वै ।  
 शुचि निष्प्राणकम् तोयं जम्भलाय यथाविधि ॥५॥  
 दद्याद अष्टौ शतान्येव प्रेतेभ्येश चुलुकांस्तथा ।  
 पश्चान् मृच्चैत्यकर्मादि बुद्धादीनां च पूजनम् ॥६॥  
 गुरोमण्डलकं कृत्वा स्वष्टदेवस्य मण्डलम् ।  
 प्रजापारमितादीनां पाठं कुर्याद् यथेप्सितम् ॥७॥  
 कृत्वा प्रदक्षिणां तेभ्यो प्रणिधिं च विशेषतः ।  
 बोधिसत्त्वलिं दत्वा शासनस्य चीरस्थितिम् ॥८॥  
 आशंसयेत् प्रहृष्टेन चेतसा सुसमाहितः ।  
 वन्दनापूर्वक पश्चाद् गुरुबुद्धां विसर्जयेत् ॥९॥

Plate No. 1. Daily rules in Sanskrit to be followed by *Ādikarmic Bodhisattva*, as  
 mentioned in *Ādikarmic Pradeep*.

## Annex-2

A topography of *Newār* Buddhist monasteries with example from Lalitpur

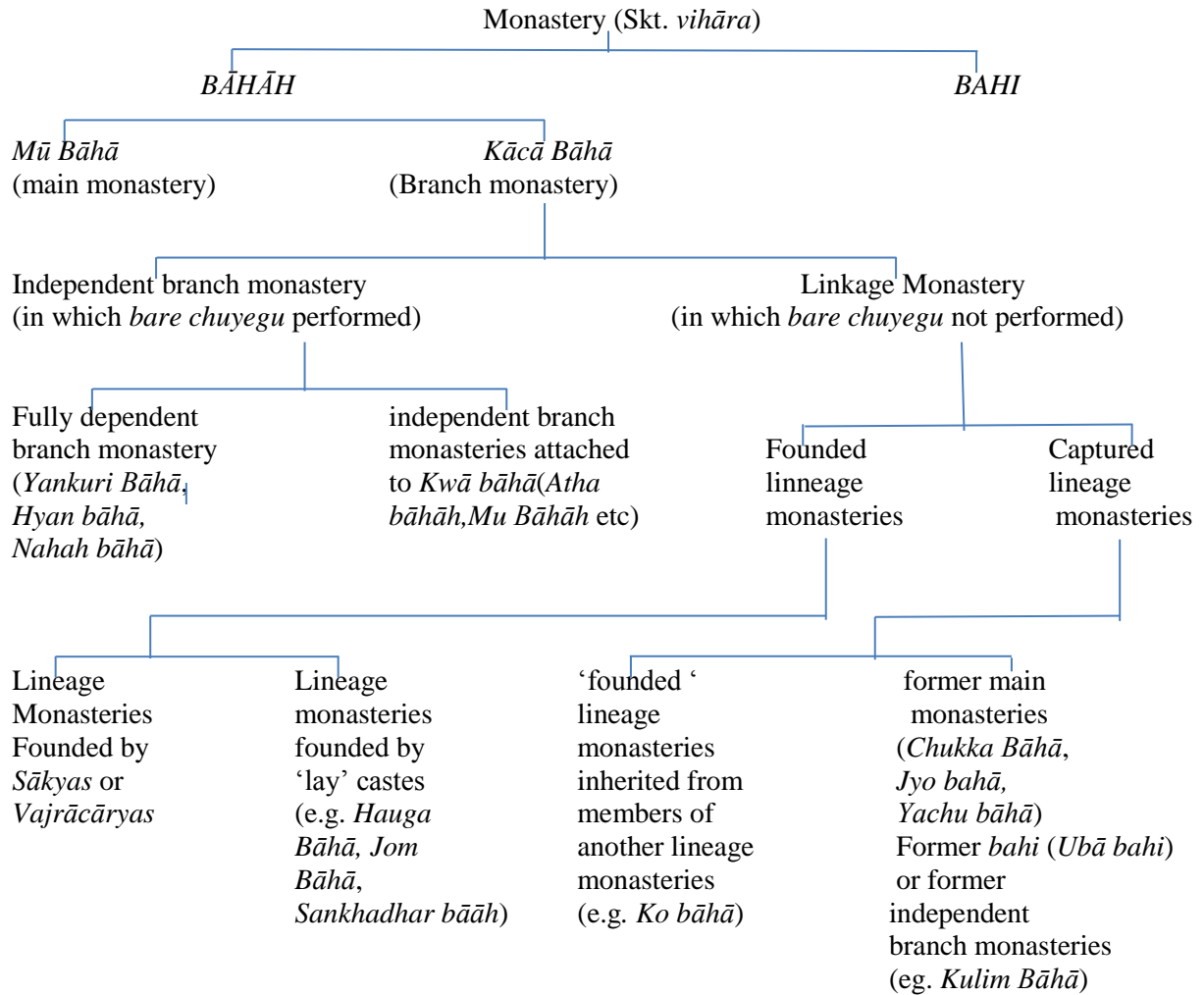


Plate No. 2 Chart on- “A topography of *Newār* Buddhist monasteries with example from Lalitpur”

Source: David N. Gellner, *The Anthropology of Buddhism and Hinduism*, Weberian Themes (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), P. 140

### Annex-3

	Main monastery	<i>Bahi</i> of today	17 <sup>th</sup> Century <i>bahi</i>	Fully independent branch monastery	Independent branch monastery of <i>Kwa Bāhā</i>	Lineage Monastery	Monastery by extension	Monastery in the hills
<i>Caitya</i> and main deity	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	No	Yes
Tantric shrine	yes	yes	No	Yes	yes	yes	No	No
<i>Vajrācārya</i> members	yes	no	No	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
Ritually established as a monastery	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	No	No
Has a system of god guardians	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes	No	No
No. of elders	10	5	Not known	5	5	No elders but <i>thakālī</i>	No	No
Sangha	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	No	No	No
<i>Pravajyā</i> performed there	yes	yes	Yes	yes	Yes Half of the ceremony in <i>Kwā-bāhā</i>	No <i>Pravajyā</i> given to cross children	No	yes
Can be a focus of devotion by non-members and lay castes	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	No	No	yes

Plate No. 3 Chart on “Principal characteristics serving to distinguish different types of the *Newār* Buddhist monasteries.”

Source: David N. Gellner, *The Anthropology of Buddhism and Hinduism. Weberian Themes* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001), P. 141

### Annex- 4

Below given is the list of functions/activities carried out in *Newār* monasteries.

1. *Daily Morning worship*
2. *Namasangiti recitation*
3. *Recitation of hymns*
4. *Bhajan*
5. *Busadan (annually)*
6. *Bahidyo bwayegu- Displaying monastery's property including the deities with ornaments*
7. *Yama:dyo bwayegu*
8. *Alamata chyakegu- lighting a lantern high on the bamboo pole*
9. *Gatila Dhalan danegu*
10. *Halimali bwayegu*
11. *Patha gwayegu*
12. *Gunla sewa henegu*
13. *Gunla paro dhunkegu*
14. *San depuja hanegu*
15. *Bande chuyegu*
16. *Panchatha: luyegu*
17. *Naya: luyegu*
18. *Thapa: twayegu*
19. *Acaluyegu*
20. *Syenlhawan jya yayegu*
21. *Lan jya yayegu*
22. *Dashamipuja yayegu*
23. *Charhe puja yayegu*
24. *Amaipuja yayegu*
25. *Tisha silejya yayegu*
26. *Bun lanswa wanegu*
27. *Jeega biyegu*
28. *Ya:tin Thanegu*
29. *Hathu hayekegu*
30. *Mukhasti Dhalan danegu*



31. *Chau chayegu*
32. *Sasupuja nyayakeku*
33. *San bhwaye nyayekegu*
34. *Danadatta guthi hanegu*
35. *Sanagu hanegu*
36. *Bichgu hanegu*
37. *Ghaye Puikegu*
38. *Sakhwapa payegu*
39. *Tun iyegu*
40. *La: Pui chayegu*
41. *Daupuja hanegu*
42. *Jakidajya hanegu*
43. *Bhandar kyenegu*
44. *Lyacha swayegu*
45. *Dekha nyayeke*
46. *Luchidyo thaye*
47. *Tirtha sewa nyayeke*
48. *Bāhā: puja one*
49. *Mataya one (in Lalitpur only)*
50. *Wanla one*
51. *Dipankha one (in Lalitpur only)*
52. *Naran nyayeke*
53. *Panjaran nyayeke*
54. *Samyak yaye*
55. *Bakhan kanke*
56. *KwaBāhā:ju jatra yaye*
57. *Mhayapi cha:ka: one*
58. *Rangarogan yaye*
59. *Sansar yajna yaye*
60. *Ayutahuti yajna yaye*
61. *Lakshahuti yajna yaye*
62. *Kotyahuti yajna yaye*
63. *Mahabali bali*
64. *Varshapan vidhi yaye*
65. *Chattisamver puja nritya*
66. *Main chatrarohan*

67.*Panchamrit dhara hayeke*

68.*Vajradhatu Deguri kramavithi*

69.*Dharmadhatu mahamandala puja vithi.*

70.*Many other Personal family oriented celebrations like life cycle rites e.g dashakarma, Jyajanko etc.*

(Source: Hemraj Shakya, “ Jhigu Baudha Sampada- Our buddhist heritage” in Herakaji Bajracharya, *Lalitpur Baudha Vihāra*, (Lalitpur: Baudha Vihāra Sangha, 2000) Pp. ka- ga)

## Annex-5

### Monasteries lost in the history

Monasteries of *Lichchavī* period:

1. *Bhuvankar Shreevihāra*
2. *Mānavihāra*
3. *Shree Rājvihāra*
4. *Kharjurikā vihāra*
5. *Ajika vihār*
6. *Madhyama vihāra*
7. *Abhayaruchi vihāra*
8. *Chartubhalaṭa vihāra*
9. *MahaPratiharaavarta Sujataprabhu vihāra*
10. *Vartakalyan Gupta vihāra*
11. *Shivadeva vihāra*
12. *Ārya Pranidhi vihāra*
13. *Javam Vatma vihār*
14. *Jiva varma vihāra*
15. *Na vihāra*
16. *Nandiśāla vihāra*

Monasteries of Medieval period

1. *Lhān vihāra*
2. *Rāghāvadeva vihāra*
3. *Mhatwatishchal vihāra*
4. *Nimni Bāhā*
5. *Yaku Bāhā*
6. *Vri vihāra*
7. *Saptapuri Mahavihāra*
8. *Padmacakra Mahavihāra*

9. *Chakavaṭi Mahavihāra*
10. *Parinirvana vihāra*
11. *Chitra Mahāvihāra*
12. *Vaishyashree Diwākar vrma Mahāvihāra*
13. *Bukham vihāra*
14. *Jayamanohar varṇa Mahavihāra*
15. *Hanal vihāra*
16. *Yokhachcha vihāra*
17. *Wvakwe vihāra*
18. *Yangwa vihāra*
19. *Ko vihāra*
20. *Puneśvara vihāra*
21. *Puneshwar vihāra*
22. *Talpul Mahāvihāra*
23. *Pinda vihāra*
24. *Arako vihāra*
25. *Taligla vihāra*
26. *Kothu Harsha bāhā*
27. *Baniyā bāhā*
28. *Datu Bāhā*
29. *Sahajanandaya bāhā*
30. *Pithu kwasa bāhā*
31. *Dhasin Bareyā bāhā*
32. *Vayu bāhāA latun*
33. *Jalajuya bāhā*

Source: Ratnakaji, Bijayratna, *Nepa:de:ya Vihārāya Ta:cha- Key to Vihāras in Nepal*, (Kathmandu: Ratnakaji, Bijayratna Bajracharya, 1983), Pp.108-109.

## Annex-6

Andre Bareau has compiled the names of thirty-four schools from literary sources and from inscriptions recording gifts made to various orders. Below is a list of schools that follows the spelling given by the Bareau.

Mahasanghika

Lokottaravadin

Ekvyāvahārika

Gokulika or Kukkutika

Bahuśrutiya

Prajñāptivādin

Caitiya or Caitika

Andhaka

Pūrvaśaila or Uttaraśaila

Aparaśaila

Rajāgirīya

Siddhārthika

Sthavira

Haimavata

Vātsīputrīya

Sammatiya

Dharmottariya

Bhadrayānīya

Ṣaṇṇagarika or Ṣaṇḍagiriya

Sarvāstivādin or Vaibhāsika

Mūlasarvāstivādin

Sautrāntika or Saṅkrāntivādin

Dārstāntika

Vibhajyavādin (Sri Lankan Theravāda School)

Mahīśāsaka

Dharmaguptaka

Kāśyapīya or Survarṣaka

Tāmraśātīya (Srilankan School)

Mahāvihāra sect of the Theravadin School

Abhayagirivāsin or Dhammarucika

Jetavanīya Sāgalika

Hetuvādin

Uttarāpathaka

Vetullaka

## Annex-7

### The Qualities of an *Ācārya* on the basis of the *Ācāryakriyā samuccaya* of Jagaddarpaṇa.<sup>1</sup>

Buddhist tantric works attach a paramount importance to the proper instruction of the rituals to the followers and in this context the position of a teacher or a *guru* well versed in the teaching of these rites, becomes all the more important. The *Hevajra tantra* gives him not less than three names viz. *guru*, *ācārya* and *śāstri* whose responsibility is to find out the right means for his pupil of the tantric rites. It is established that “in the realization of the perfect truth, there is neither wisdom nor means. By no other may it be told and from no one may it be received. It is known intuitively as a result of merit and of honouring one’s guru and the set of observances “<sup>2</sup>

The text of Jagadarpaṇa, reveals us a source of new indications and numerous precisions on the subject.

The text has several details of the *Buddhist* tantric rites. The passage of interest is in the beginning of the first section entitled “*Acarya-laksana-vidhī*”.

The text defines in eloquent terms the qualities of an *ācārya*- one who shows the path of conduct of this world and of the next, is the *acarya Laukikalokottarācāram darshayatityācārya*.

---

<sup>1</sup> N.S. Shukla “The Qualities of an Acarya on the basis of the Acaryakriya samuccaya of Jaddarpaṇa” in Ramchandra Pandeya(ed.) (Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass) pp. 126-136

<sup>2</sup> Snellgrove, Hevajra Tantra, part II, P-28

## **Annex-8**

### **Map of Lalitpur**



## Annex-9

### Maplist of Monasteries in Lalitpur

All main *Bāhās* and *bahis* are called *Mahāvihāra*; all branches are simply called *vihāra*.

1. *Pām Bāhā—Kānaka Data Vihāra Na Tole*
2. *Kwātha Bāhā –Kotta Vihāra, Na Tole*
3. *Na Bāhā –Padmāvati Nama Vihāra Na Tole*
4. *Dune Naka Bāhā –(Padmāvati)Yokulivarna Vihāra Na tole*
5. *Gā Bāhā –Gāda Vihāra (Śrī Nimna Sri Viśvaśānti Vihāra), Gā Bāhā Tole*
6. *Khwāy Bahi –Kāmuka Nāma Mahāvihāra, Na Bāhā Tole*
7. *Khway Bahi Cidhangu --?? Na Bāhā Tole*
8. *Si Bāhā- Śrī Vaccha Mahāvihāra, Si Bāhā Tole*
9. *Bachā Bāhā –Śrī Vaccha Vihāra Si Bāhā Tole*
10. *Yāka Bāhā –Dharmakirti Nama Vihāra Si Bāhā Tole*
11. *Devrāj Bāhā –Devrāja Vihāra, Bu Bāhā Tole*
12. *Sija Bāhā—Sri Vatsa Dundubhi Vihāra Bu Bāhā Tole*
13. *Kisi Cok Bāhā – Sukhavatiprasada Triratnayoga Vihāra, Bu Bāhā Tole*
14. *Māka Bāhā – (Sri Vatsa) Kanakavarṇa Vihāra si Bāhā Tole*
15. *Chāya Bāhā – Ratnamuni Samskārita Vihāra, Chaya Bāhā Tole (Cchwaca Bāhā)*  
*Chatravarma Vihāraa*
16. *Ganeśa Bāhā – Cakramukta Vihāra, Chāya Bāhā Tole Tun Nani*
17. *Bāhācā – Chāya Vihāra, Chāya Bāhā Tole*

18. *Mū Bāhā – Mūla Sri Vihāra, Pim Bāhā Tole (Sri Gavarma Pinta Vihāra)*
19. *Pim Bāhā – Mahāpinta Vihāra, Pim Bāhā Tole*
20. *Duru Nani Bāhā -- Cukha Vihāra, Pim Bāhā tole*
21. *Mikhā Bāhā – Supreksana Vihāra, Patan Dhokā*
22. *Wanlā Bāhā – Harsavira Samkārīta Wolhanama Vihāra, Wala Tole*
23. *Nhū Bāhā – Nava Vihāra, Bu Bāhā Tole*
24. *Ha Bāhā – Sri Lakshmi Kalyāna Varma Samskārīta Ratnākara Mahāvihāra Hakā Bāhā Tole*
25. *Wāchen Nani Bāhāca – Dhanavata Simha Vihāra Wala Tole*
26. *Jyena Bāhā – Sri Jnana Nama Vihāra Jyena Bāhā Tole*
27. *Nalacchi Bāhā – Jagat Mandala Vihāra Agni math*
28. *Bhelaku Bāhā Dharmakīrti Mahāvihāriya Bhairava Kuta Vihāra Dau Bāhā Tolee*
29. *Nhāykan Bahi – Surascandra Mahahihara Ikhalakhu Tole*
30. *Ichha Bāhā – Ika Nama Vihāra Ikhalakhu tole*
31. *Bū Bāhā – Vidyadhara Sarma Samskarita Yasodhara (Brahma) Mahāvihāra Bu Bāhā Tole*
32. *I Bāhā – Yokuli Ika nama Vihāra Ikhalakhu Bāhā Tole*
33. *Nandaya Bu Bāhā – Devajyoti Vihāra Bu Bāhā Tole*
34. *Wanku du Bāhā – Sukhavati (kalpa Prasada) Vihāra bu Bha*
35. *Jishwan Bāhā – Devaraja vihāra bu Bāhā tole (Deva Raj Bāhā)*
36. *Bhagawān Chok – Sukhavati (kalpa Prasad) Vihāra Bu Bāhā*
37. *Wana Bāhā – Udayadeva Vihāra Wana Bāhā Tole*
38. *Wanagata Bāhā – Bhairava Simha Vihāra Bu Bāhā Tole*

39. *Dau Bāhā –RudraDeva Gargagotra Varma Samskarita Sri Dattanama Mahavihāra*
40. *Yoku Bāhā –Yokuli Mahavihāra Dau Bāhā Tole*
41. *Yen̄kuli Bāhā –Sukavati Prasada Vihāra, Dau Bāhā Tole*
42. *Wala Bāhā Dattu Nani – Yanta Vihāra Da Bāhā Tole*
43. *Joga Dhusa – Jagajyoti Vihāra, Dau Bāhā Tole*
44. *Atha Bāhā – Anandadeva Samskarita Sri Vatsa Vihāra, Naka Bahi*
45. *Naka Bahi -- Gangadeva Samskārita Lokakirti Mahavihāra Naka Bahi*
46. *Thyāka Bāhā – Ratna Jyoti Vihāra Khachen Bāhā*
47. *Khā chen Bāhā – Jyotivarna Vihāra, Khanchen Bāhā*
48. *Nhā Bāhā –Navakriti Vihāra Dhalyacha Tole*
49. *Dhaugā Bahi –Manimandapa Mahavihāra patuka Tole*
50. *Yatā Bāhā – Hemapuri Vihāra Balipa Tole*
51. *Nākhācuk – Bhāskarvarṇa Vihāra, Nākhācuka*
52. *Unacabhā jubala Bāhā – Bhajubala Vihar nakhacuka*
53. *Aki Bāhā – Atasakirti Vihar Nyadha Tole*
54. *Mati Bāhā—Mati Vihāra Naka Bahi Tole*
55. *Mati Bāhāca – Govinda simha Vihāra Naka Bahi Tole*
56. *Nāg Bāhā – Sri sajaya jītena samathapīta vasuwardthame Vihāra Nag Bāhā*
57. *Michu Bāhā – Caityavarna Vihāra Ela Nani*
58. *Baidya Bāhā – Duarika Vihāra Ela Nani*
59. *Kwā Bāhā – bhaskara Deva Samskarita hiranyavarana Bāhā Vihāra kwalakhu tole*
60. *Sasu Nani Manjushree lanhe – Vagisvara Vihāra Kwalkhu tole*
61. *Kuti Bāhā – Kwaniyam Vihāra Nag Bāhā Tole*

62. *Ikhā Chen Bāhā – Suvarna Vihāra Ikachen tole*
63. *Duntu bahi – Gobhardhan Misra Samkarita Napichandra Mahavihāra Ikachen tole*
64. *Pintu Bahi – Gopichandra Misra Samkarita Gopicandra Mahavihāra Ikachen Tole*
65. *Āna Bāhā—Ananda Vihāra Ikachen tole*
66. *Yokhāchen Bāhā – Sunanda Vihāra Yokhachen tole*
67. *Konti Cidhangu Bahi—Lalitavarna Vihāra Konti Tole*
68. *Konti Bahi – Kasyapa Misra Samakarita Lalitavarana Mahavihāra Konti Tole*
69. *Konti Bāhā -- ?? Kumbevara*
70. *Ko Bāhā – Itum Vihāra Ko Bāhā Tole*
71. *Kwalim Bāhā – killim Vihāra Kilim Tole*
72. *Bāhācā -- Swantha Tole*
73. *Dhum Bāhā – Gunalaksmi Samskarita Gunalaksmi mahavihāra*
74. *Ko Bāhā tole Bāhāca-Swantha tole*
75. *Sika Bahi-- Sika Bahi*
76. *Yamp Bahi 1*
77. *Yamp Bahi 2*
78. *Yamp Bahi 3*
79. *I Bahi (2) – Yampikarunacuka I Bahi*
80. *Sankha Bāhā – Sankhadhara Samskarita Triratna Vihāra Chyassal tole*
81. *(Cikan) Bahicā – Triratna Vira Vihāra Chyassal Tole*
82. *Cikan Bahi Buddhimān – Manukuta Vihāra Chyassal Tole*
83. *Cikan Bahi – Saptapuri Mahavihāra Chyassal Tole*
84. *Kulranta Bāhā – Sumangala Vihāra Chyassal Tole*

85. *Swantha Bāhā – Swanta Vihāra Swantha tole*
86. *Bhaisajyaraj Bāhā – Bhaisajyara Vihāra Chyassal Tole*
87. *Hoda Bāhā –Hodola Nama Vihāra Chyassal tole*
88. *Ci Bāhā Nani -- ? Olaku bhindya Lashi*
89. *Wam Bāhā – Suryavarma Samskarita Vajrakriti Mahavihāra Olakhu Tole*
90. *Wam Bāhā Dune Nani – Dharmakirti Vihāra Wam Bāhā*
91. *Lakhivhan Bāhā – Suryadharma Vihāra Wam Bāhā*
92. *Jyo Bāhā – Rudredeva Nangapala Samskarita Jyoti Mahavihāra Olakhu Tole*
93. *Huuga Bāhā – Hastinga Vihāra Hauga Tole*
94. *Jom Bāhā -- Jagat Kalyana Vihāra Hauga Tole*
95. *Iku Bāhā – Iku Varna Vihāra Ikhalkhu Tole .140*
96. *Ikhālakhu Bāhā -- ?? Ikhalkhu Tole*
97. *Iba Bahi – Rājashri Mahavihāra Chaka Bāhā Tole*
98. *Iba Dune – Bhajudhana Simha Vihāra Chaka Bāhā Tole*
99. *Ta Bāhā – Bhuvanakara Varma Samskarita Dharmakirti Mahāvihār – Tangal Tole*
100. *Kinu Bahi – Lakakirti Mahavihāra Iti Tole*
101. *Thati Bāhā—Thatinama Vihāra Thati Tole*
102. *Cuka Bāhā – Manadeva Samskrita Cakravarṇa Mahavihāra Tangal Tole*
103. *Tanga Bāhā –Yampi Balarcana Samaskrita Jyesthavarṇa Mahavihāra, Tangal tole*
104. *Triratna Sim Bāhā—Triratna Simha Vihāra Hakha tole*
105. *Harsa Bāhā – Dharma Kirti Vihāra Hakha tole*
106. *Dhandya Bāhā – Dhanavira Vihāra Hakha Tole*

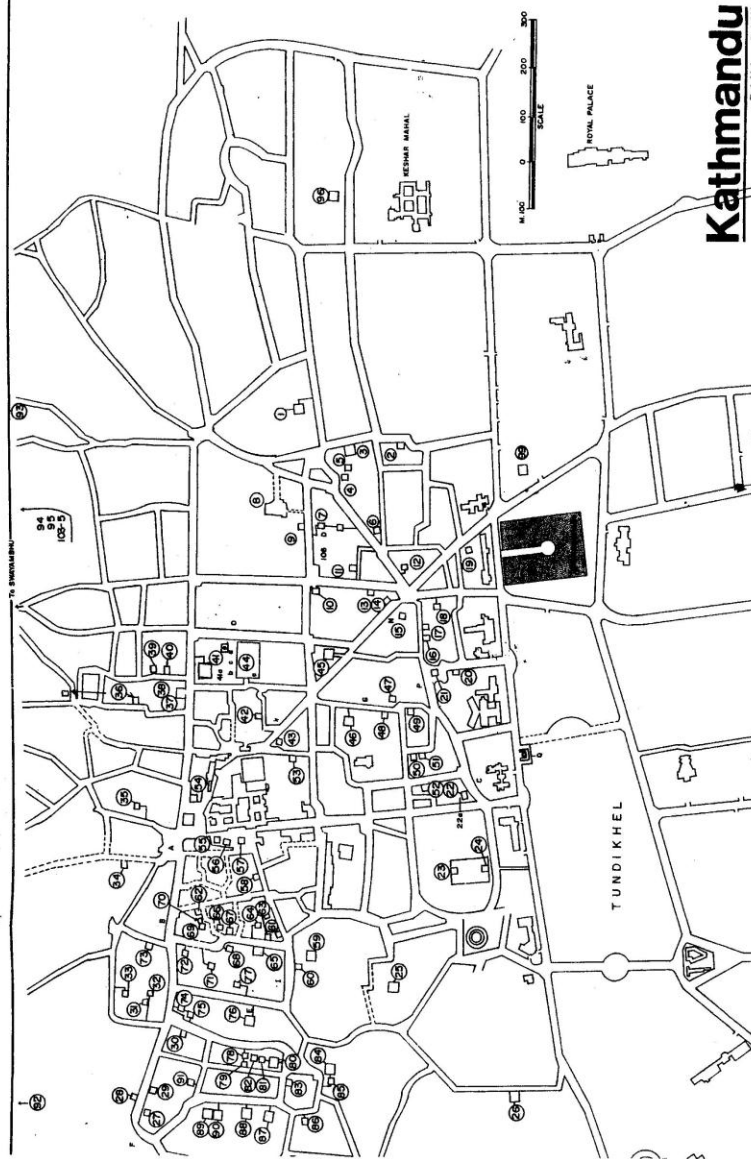
107. *Gwanga Bāhā—Bha juman Kirti Vihāra Caka Bāhā*
108. *Sum Bāhā – Suvarna Vihāra Sauge Tole*
109. *Saga Bāhā – Ratnajyoti Vihāra Sauga Tole*
110. *Yangala Bhuja—Yangra – ugra Nama Vihāra Yamu Bāhā*
111. *Twāya Bāhā – (Nogakabhota) Mitravarna Vihāra Nuga Tole*
112. *Dathu Bāhā – Amrtavarna Vihāra Nugha Tole*
113. *Nuga Nhu Bāhā – Amrtavajra Samakarita Amrtavarna Vihāra Nuga Tole*
114. *Yavhu Bāhā – Baladhara gupta Samskarita Baladharagupta Mahavihāra  
Yacchu Tole*
115. *Bhindhya Bāhā – Hendupati Vihāra Nuga Tole*
116. *Hyana Bāhā—Layanacaityabimba Mahavihāra Nuga Bāhā*
117. *Tana Bāhā – Jayamangala Vihāra Dhanaki Tole*
118. *Su Bāhā—Indradeva Samskrita Jaya Mandhara Varma Mahavihāra Su Bāhā  
Tole*
119. *Purnasundat Bāhā – Purnasundar Vihāra Su Bāhā Tole*
120. *Thakun Bāhā – Ratnajaya Vihāra Su Bāhā Tole*
121. *Pinche Bāhā – Jnana Candra Vihāra Pinche Tole*
122. *Guita Bahi – Dipavati Nagare Sarvanandanrpa Samskrita Padmoccasri  
Mahāvihāra*
123. *Mūl Guita Bahi—Saptapura Mahavihāra Guita Bahi Tole*
124. *Gustala Bahi—Gustala Vihāra Guita Bahi Tole*
125. *Bhinche Bāhā – Sankaradeva Samskarita Mayurvarna Mahavihāra Bhinche  
Bāhā Tole*

126. *Tadhari Bāhā – Jhana kirti Vihāra guji Bāhā Tole*
127. *Pilāchen Bāhā – Mayuravarna Mahāvihāriya Pilachen tole*
128. *Pilachen Cidhañ Bāhā –Pilakse Nama Vihāra Pilachen Tole*
129. *Pilachen Dathu Bāhā – Bhimacandra Vihāra Pilachen Tole*
130. *Ilā Bahi – Itiraja Mahavihāra Nuga Tole*
131. *Pānda Bāhā – pandava Vihāra Lunkhusi*
132. *Yanga Bāhā – Yogalakhya vihāra Lunkhusi (sumangala vihāra –recent name)*
133. *Kani Bāhā –Kanakavarna Vihāra uku Bāhā Tole*
134. *Nhū Bāhā – Dhanavajra Vihāra uku Bāhā Tole*
135. *Mahābuddha – Bodhimandapa Vihāra Mahabuddha*
136. *Dhanananda Bāhā – Sri Gana Vihāra Mahabuddha*
137. *Jati Bāhā –Jayativarna Vihāra uku Bāhā Tole*
138. *Duni Bāhā – Purnachandra Vihāra uku Bāhā Tole*
139. *Uba Bahi –Jaya Simha Virabhadra Samskarita Jayasri Mahavihāra Uku Bāhā Tole*
140. *U Bāhā – Sivadevavarna Samskarita Sri Rudravarma Unkuli Nama Mahavihāra Uku Bāhā Tole*
141. *Ubā Gathica – Khanda Cuka Vihāra uku Bāhā*
142. *Tago Cibana – Yantarivi Vihāra uku Bāhā*
143. *Ta Ja Bāhā – Bhaju Kirti Hirnayalabha Vihāra Uku Bāhā*
144. *Cidhari Ta Ja Bāhā Uku Bāhā Tole*
145. *Ta Ja Bāhā – Iksuvarna Vihāra Uku Bāhā Tole*
146. *Nagu Bāhā –Rupavarna Vihāra Uku Bāhā Tole*

147. *Dhana Bāhā – Dhanavira Simha Vihāra Jyatha Tole*
148. *Basu Bāhā – Vasuvarna Vihāra Jyatha Tole*
149. *Jyāthā Bāhā – Padmavarna Vihāra Jyatha Tole*
150. *Hitiphusa Bāhā – Jinavarna Vihāra Thapa Hiti*
151. *Cidhari Guji Bāhā—amrtavarna Vihāra Guji Bāhā*
152. *Guji Bāhā – Vaisya Sri Divakara Varma (Samakrita) Mahavihāra Guji Bāhā*
153. *Manirāj Bāhā—Maniraja Guji Bāhā*
154. *Siddhi Bāhā – Vaisravarna Bhaskara Varna Vihāra Giju Bāhā*
155. *Thapa Bahi—Sthavirapatra Mahavihāra Thapa Tole*
156. *Pālu Bāhā—Samantabhandra Vihāra, Thāpa Tole*
157. *Sikucha Bāhā – Simha Cuka Vihāra Thaina Tole*
158. *Kwātha Bāhā – Kuta Simha Vihāra Thaina Tole*
159. *Jothā Bāhā—Jayasri Vihāra Thaina tole*
160. *Yatalibi Nhu Chen Bāhā – Bhima Krta Ratnalabha Vihāra Uka Bāhā Tole*
161. *Kuldev Bāhā – kulacaitya Kirti Vihāra Thaina Tole*
162. *Naudo Bāhā—Devadatta Vihāra Naudo Tole*
163. *Jyabā Bahi – jyestavarna Mahavihāra Chaka Bāhā Tole*
164. *Naha Bāhā – Cakra Kirti Mahavihāra Chaka Bāhā Tole*
165. *Cwecwangu Puco Bahi—(Silapuravanagiri) Aksesvara Mahavihāra Pucho*
166. *Kwecwangu Puco Bahi – Raksesvara Mahavihāra Puco*
167. *Co Bāhā – Indradeva Samkarita Sri Asanalokesvara Mahāvihāra Cobhar*
168. *Cithun Bahi – Padmakirtigiri Mahāvihāra Kirtipur*
169. *Yāka Bāhā – Jivadharma Vihāra Kirtipur*



170. *Kusi Bāhā—Mahākirti Vihāra Kirtipur*
171. *Kwe Bāhā – Karnata Vihāra, Kirtipur*
172. *Chwe Bāhā—Harsakirti Vihāra, Kirtipur*
173. *Tunjalayacwangu Bāhā – Padmocca Vihāra, Kirtipur*
174. *Cilanco Bāhā – Jagatapalavarma Samskarita Padmakastha Giri Mahavihāra  
Kirtipur (kyapu Bāhā)*
175. *Bunga Bāhā –Narendradeva Samskarita Amaravatinama Mahavihāra  
Bungamati*
176. *Kwāchen Nani Bāhā – Nijapati Vihāra Bungamati*
177. *Bunga Bahi –AmaravatipuraMahavihāra Bungamati*
178. *Coya Bahi – Cobhar*
179. *Duru Kya Bāhā – Hemavarna mahavihāra Duru Khya –Chapagaun*
180. *Ikha Bāhā – Kalyan Mahavihāra Chapagaon*
181. *Wā Bahi – Chapagaon*
182. *Kwā Nani – Baregaon*
183. *Phampi Bāhā –Vajrajogini – Gaganaksara Majhavihāra Pharping*
184. *Phampi Bahi – Pharping*
185. *Bare Nani – Bungamati*



**Annex- 11****MAP OF KATHMANDU**

## Annex-12

### Maplist of Monasteries in Kathmandu

1. *Kwā Bāhā - Maitripur Mahāvihār, Thahiti-Kwa Bāhā*
2. *Chusyā Bāhā - Guṇākar Vihāra, Jyātha Tole*
3. *Musyā Bāhā – Karuṇāpura Vihāra, Jyatha*
4. *Jhwā Bāhā – Ratnaketu Vihāra, Thahiti Tole*
5. *Jyotiyyā Bāhā- Triratnaketu Vihāra, Jhwā Bāhā*
6. *Dhwākā Bāhā- Henakara Mahāvihāra, Tyauda-Dhwākā Bāhā*
7. *Gam Bāhā- Hemavarna Mahāvihāra, Nasa Tole*
8. *Sigha Bāhā - Santighata Caitya Mahāvihāra, Nagha Tole*
9. *Nagha Bāhā- Ratnamaṇḍala Mahāvihāra, Nagha Tole*
10. *(Nhu (=Jhwā) Bāhā- Ratnaketu Mahāvihāra, Thāyemadu Tole*
11. *Cā Bāhā- Karnaketu Vihāra, Nhaya*
12. *Dhalisikwa Bāhā- Gautam Sri Vihāra, Asan- Dhalisikwa*
13. *Hāku Bāhā- Harsacaitya Vihāra, Asan Tole*
14. *Kwatu Bāhā- Ashokavrsa Vihāra, Asan Tole*
15. *Takse Bāhā-Suratsri Mahāvihāra, Asan Takse Bāhā*
16. *Hwakha Bāhā-Asokasri Vihāra, Asan Tole*
17. *Asan Bāhā- Asokacaitya Mahāvihāra, Asan jarunchen*
18. *Dagu Bāhā- Ranghabhuvan Vihāra, Bhotahiti*
19. *Tekan Bāhā- Bodhiprasthan Vihāra, Konaya Tole*
20. *Mahābuddha Kacā Bāhā – Bodhipranidhi Vihāra, Mahabuddha*
21. *Mahābu Bāhā- Mahābuddha Mahāvihāra, Mahābuddha*
22. *Dugan Bahi- Sadaksari Mahāvihāra, Dugan Bahi*
- 22a. *Kothu Dugan Bahi – Sadaksari Mahāvihāra, Dugan Bahi*
23. *Te Bāhā- Rajakirti Mahāvihāra, Sivadeva Samskarita Sri Tedo Mahāvihāra, Te Bāhā*
24. *(Te Bāhā)- Bandhudatta Vihāra, Te Bāhā*
25. *Gaṇa Bahi- Gangāsangam Mahavihara, GaṇṇBāhā*
26. *Bhote Bāhā- Brahmacakra Vihāra, Bhote Bāhā, Central jail*
27. *Kusan Bāhā- Ratnākara Mahāvihāra, Hyumat tole*
28. *Tamu Bāhā- Ratnākara Vihāra- Hyumat Tole*
29. *Tukan Bāhā- Ratnakara Vihāra, Hyumat Tole*

30. *Lhugha Bāhā- Maitri-uddhara Vihāra, Jaisi Deval*
31. *Ko hiti Bāhā- Kirtipunya Mahāvihāra, Ko Hiti Tole*
32. *Ko Hiti Kacā Bāhā, Ko Hiti Tole*
33. *Yo Bāhā- nadisanga Rajkr̥ta Vihāra, Ko Hiti Tole*
34. *Chwasāpā Bāhā- Sukhāvati Vihāra, Maru Tole*
35. *Maru Bāhā- Śākyaketu Mahāvihāra, Maru Tole*
36. *Mukum Bahi Muktipura Mahāvihāra, Yatakā-Mukum Kewa*
37. *Dhanasimha Bāhā, Samantabhadra Vihāra, Yataka Bāhā*
38. *Yatakhā Bāhā, Bhāskarakirti Vihāra, Yatakhā Bāhā*
39. *Tamuga Bāhā, Ratnakara Vihāra, Tamuga Galli*
40. *Tamu Bāhā- Dharmacitta Vihāra, Tamuga Galli*
41. *Arakhu Bahi- Italampu Kr̥ta Mahāvihāra, YatakhāTole*
- 41a. *Mahankā Bahi-, Yatakhā Tole*
42. *Makhan Bāhā- Ratnakirti Mahāvihāra, Makhan Tole*
43. *Makhan Bahi- Rajakr̥ta Mahāvihāra, Makhan Tole*
44. *Itum Bāhā- Bhāskara Deva Samskār̥ita Sri Kesavacandra Kr̥ta Pārāvata Mahāvihāra, Itum Bāhā*
- 44a. *Kayagu Nani- Asoka Mandap Vihāra, Item Bāhā*
- 44.b. *Baku Nani- Kutum vihar, Itum Bāhā*
- 44.c *Tārā Nani- Dharmacakra Vihāra, Itum Bāhā*
- 44.d *Sasu nani- Saraswati Mahāamanjushree Vihāra, Itum Bāhā*
- 44.e *Dhananju Caitya- Dhavala Caitya Vihāra, Itum Bāhā*
45. *Jana Bāhā- Kanak Caitya Mahāvihāra, Kel Tole*
46. *Mu Bāhā- Mula Sri Mahāvihāra, Wotu tole*
47. *Pinche Bāhā(Manju Bāhā, Khun Bāhā)- Jambunadavana Vihāra, Wotu tole*
48. *Cidan Bāhā- Jina-uddhara Vihāra, Wotu tole*
49. *Tadhan Bāhā- Dharmacakra Mahāvihāra, Wotu Tole*
50. *Sawal Bāhā-Mantrasiddhi Mahāvihāra, GuccāTole*
51. *Aju Bāhā-Dasabala Vihāra, Guccā Tole*
52. *Pyūkhā Bāhā-Asoka Caitya Vihāra, Pyukha Tole*
53. *Tunchen Bāhā- Tataksam Vihar, MakhanGalli*

54. *Lāyeku Bahi- Rajakula Vihāra, Srinaka Vihāra, hanuman Dhoka*
55. *Sikhamu Bāhā- Tarumula Mahāvihāra, Basantapur*
56. *KumārŚī Bāhā- Rajkirti Manoram Vihāra, Basantapur*  
*Kumāri chen Rajalaxmikula Vihāra*
57. *Basantapur Bāhā, Basundhara Vihāra, Basantapur*
58. *Jhochhen Bāhā- Vasundharakirti Vihāra, Jhochhen*
59. *Na Bahi- Udyotakirti Mahāvihāra, Na Bahi Tole*
60. *Na Bahicā- Dharmodhyayana Vihāra, Na Bahi Tole*
61. *Waku Bāhā- Indrapuranagara Vihāra, Jor Ganesh*
62. *Punchen Bāhā- Parvacandana Vihāra, Pode Galli- Om Bāhā*
63. *Nhu Chen Bāhā- Vajradhātu Vihāra, Om Bāhā*
64. *Kwakewa Bāhā- Amrtakanti Vihāra, om Bāhā*
65. *Gubhā Bāhā- Brahmacakra Mahāvihāra, Om Bāhā*
66. *Bikama Bāhā- manjusrinaka Mahāvihāra, Om Bāhā*
67. *Khasachen Bāhā (Wam Bāhā, Pakha chen Bāhā)- Varsacandana Vihāra, Om Bāhā*
68. *Mimnani Bāhā- Nimha Nimha Vihāra, Om Bāhā*
69. *Ganthi Nani Bāhā- Buddhaganthi Vihāra, Gachen Nani-Om Bāhā*
70. *Ratnapur Bāhā-Ratnapur Vihāra, Gachen Nani-Om Bāhā*
71. *Bhwdhātum Bāhā- Bhwanta Vihāra, Om Bāhā*
72. *Thānā Bāhā- Sthanavimba Vihāra, Cikamu Tole*
73. *Nho Bāhā- Dharma-yashodhara Vihāra, Cikamu Tole*
74. *Mikhā Bāhā- Munisangha Vihāra, Manjesvari tole*
75. *Jyā Bāhā-Jagavanda Vihāra, Jya Bāhā*
76. *Iku Bāhā-Vajrasila Mahāvihāra, Yangal Tole*
77. *So Bāhā-Dharmadhātu Sri Mahāvihāra, Yangal Tole*
78. *Kacā Bāhā- Caitanya Vihāra, Jyā Bāhā,*
79. *Khala Chen Bāhā-Parvacandana Vihāra, Jyā Bāhā*
80. *Lagan Bāhā- Kirtipunya Mahāvihāra, Lagan tole*
81. *Wanta Bāhā- Vajradhātu Vihāra, Lagan Bāhā*
82. *Jog Bāhā- , Lagan Bāhā*
83. *Ta Bāhā-KIrtipunya Vajradhātu Vihāra, Lagan Tole*
84. *Nhāyakan Bahi- Kirtipunya Mahāvihāra, Lagan Tole*
85. *Cwakan Bahi- Kirtipunya Mahāvihāra, Lagan Tole*
86. *Yata Bāhā- Kirtipunya Bhuvana Sundara Vihāra, Gophal Tole*
87. *Na Bāhā- Siddhivara Vihāra, Gophal Tole*

88. *Pikhā Bāhā-Parvacandana Vihāra, Brahma Tole*
89. *Musum Bāhā (1)- Manisangha Mahāvihāra, Musum Bāhā*
90. *Musum Bāhā (2)- Manisimha Mahāvihāra, Musum Bāhā*
91. *Dhancakra Bāhā- Dharmacakra Vihāra, Musum Bāhā*
92. *Khusi Bahi- Nadisangam Mahāvihāra, Tahachal*
93. *Bilasa Bahi- Udayagiri (Nilagiri) Mahāvihāra, Bijeswari*
94. *Syangu Bahi- Jyōstikirti Mahāvihāra, Swayambhu*
95. *Kinnu Bāhā- Sri Kirttana Vihāra, Swayambhu-Kindol*
96. *Tham Bahi- Vikramiśila Mahāvihāra, Thamel*
97. *Kwathu Cā Bahi- Gaganganja Mahāvihāra, Cābahil*
98. *Thatu Cā Bahi- Samadhimandap Mahāvihāra, Cābahil*
99. *Jamo Bāhā- Dharmakirti Vihāra, Jamal*
100. *Teku Dobān Bāhā- Chintamani Vajradipa Mahāvihāra, Teku Dobān*
101. *Ratnākara Bāhā- Ratnākara Vihāra, Gachen Nani- Om Bāhā*
102. *Cā Bahi- Dharmadevacaitya Mahāvihāra, cabahil*
103. *CidhanguKinnu Bāhā- Tejakirti Vihāra, Swayambhu Kimdol*
104. *Jogmuni Bāhā- Jagatuddhara Vihāra, Swayambhu Bhuikhel*
105. *Syangu Bāhā- Samhyagu Mahāvihāra, Swayambhu Mahacaitya*
106. *Thāyamadu Bāhā- Sthāna Mandap Mahāvihāra, Thāya Madu*

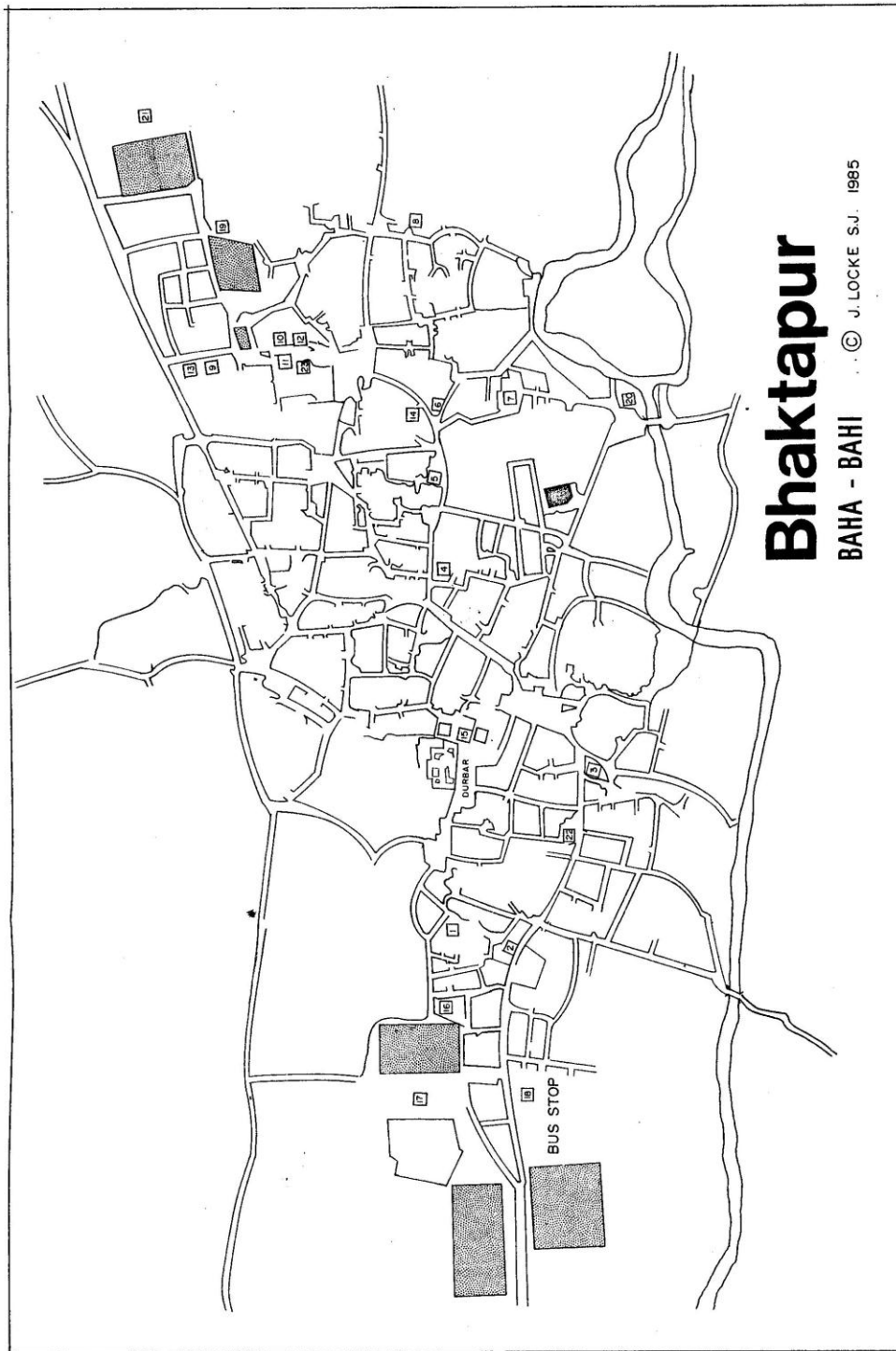
## Annex- 13

### Defunct Monasteries of Kathmandu

1. *Kasthamandap Bāhā- Kasthamandap Mahāvihāra, Maru tole*
2. *Cikan Muga Bāhā- Guhyakuxa Vihāra, CikanMuga*
3. *Bhonsiko Bāhā- Vandakrta Triratna Nama Vihāra, Dugan Bahi*
4. *Kwathu Bahi-, Thayamadu tole*
5. *Bakai Bahi- , Iku Bāhā*
6. *Buddha Bāri- Dipankara Mahabuddha Mahāvihāra, Hyumat Tole*
7. *Wotu Bāhā- , Wotu Tole*
8. *(Sawal Bāhā- Mantrasiddhi Mahāvihāra), Sawal Bāhā Tole*
9. *Bakan Bahi- , Yangal Tole*
10. *Sāmākhushi Bāhā- DharmaSri Mitra Mahāvihāra, Sāmākhushi*
11. *Sukum Bāhā- , Lazimpat*
12. *Lam Bāhā- Manjugiri Dharmadhātu Mahāvihāra, Paknajol*
13. *Pim Bāhā- Sarvasiddhi Mahāvihāra, Pasupati*
14. *Takhāchen Bāhā- Yogasadhana Vihāra, Kel Tole*
15. *Majyuyā Bāhā- Siddhinagara Mahāvihāra, Itum Bāhā*
16. *Kacā Bāhā- Ashok Catya Vihāra, Mahabaudha*
17. *Vajrabira Mahakal Bāhā- Buddha Śāsana Raksak Mahāvihāra, Tundikhel*







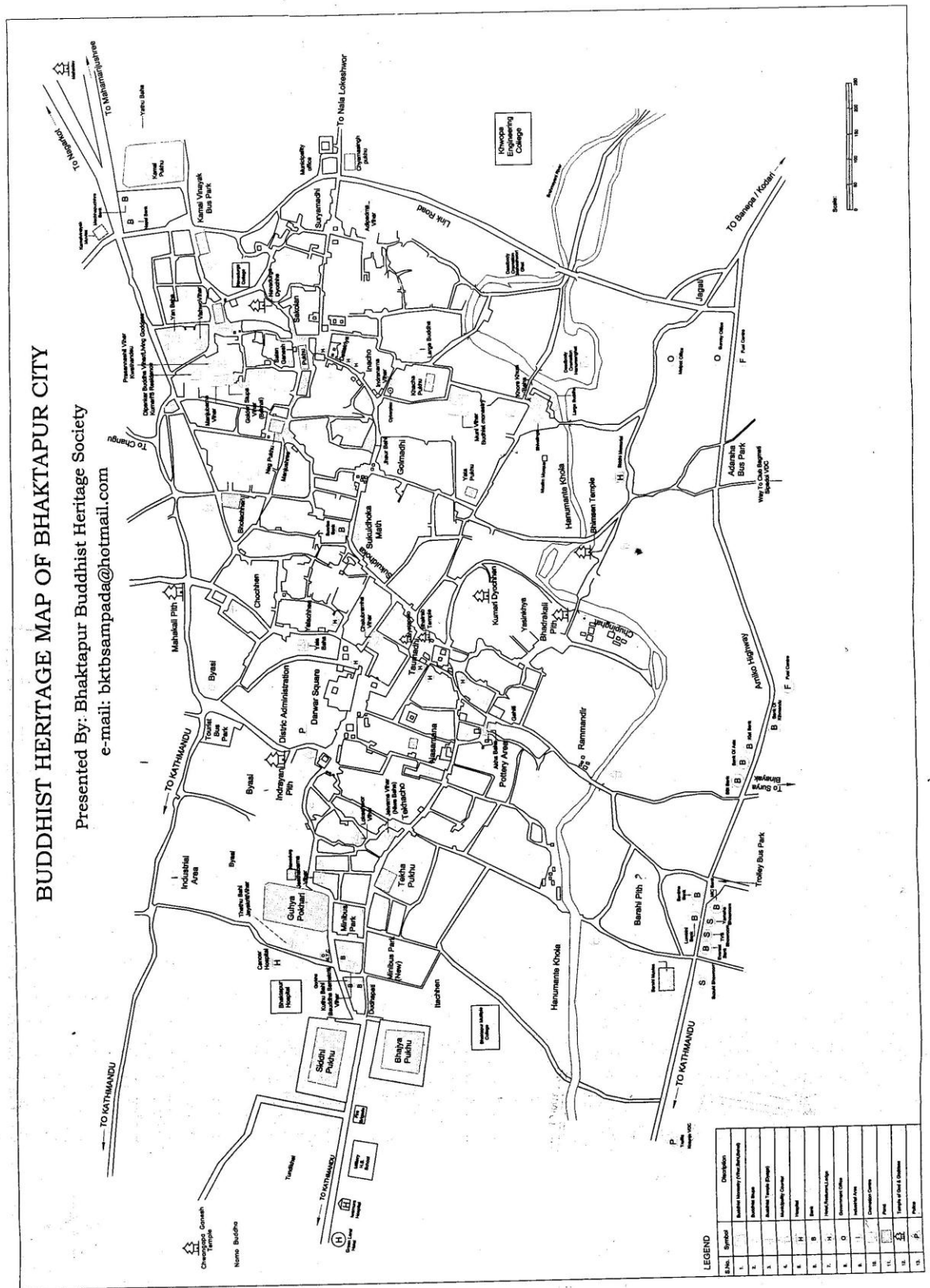
## Annex-15

### Bhaktapur Map List

1. *Laksadyayā Bāhā- Lokeśvara Mahāvihāra, Itāchen tole*
2. *Ni Bāhā- Jyesthavarṇa Mahāvihāra, Tekhāco tole*
3. *Akhan Bāhā- Akhandasila Mahāvihāra, Nāsamanā Tole*
4. *Lum Bāhā-Lumbavarṇa Mahāvihāra, Sukul Dhoka*
5. *Jaur Bahi- Mangaladharma Dvipa Mahāvihāra, Golmadhi Tole*
6. *Inaco Bāhā- Indravarta Mahāvihāra, Inaco Tole*
7. *Muni Bāhā- Dharma Uttara Mahāvihāra(Munivarna Vihāra), Ināco Tole*
8. *Tom Bāhā- Adipadma Mahāvihāra, Suryamadi Tole*
9. *Biku Bāhā- Visva Vihāra, Kwathandau Tole*
10. *Pasu Bāhā- Paśupati Mahāvihāra(Pransannasila Mahāvihāra), Kwāthaundau Tole*
11. *Ajudyaya Bāhā(Dya Nani Bāhā)- Dipankara Mahāvihāra, Kwāthandau Tole*
12. *Wam Bāhā- Manjuvajra Mahāvihāra(MahāManjuśrīMahāvihāra, Kwāathandau*
13. *Yen Bāhā- Yangalvarṇa Mahāvihāra, Kwāthandau*
14. *Ka Ma Bāhā- Jesthavarṇa Mahāvihāra, Ināco Tole*
15. *Tadhichen Bāhā-Caturbrahma Mahāvihāra, Lāyku Tole*
16. *Tekhāco Bāhā- Jyesthavarṇa Mahāvihāra, Tekhāco Tole*
17. *Thatu Bahi- Jayakirti Mahāvihāra-, Itāchen Tole*
18. *Kutu Bahi- Sukravarṇa Mahāvihāra, Bharvācho Tole*
19. *Gacchi Bāhā- , Lamgaled Tole*
20. *Khwanhe Khusi Bāhā- Sukravarṇa Mahāvihāra, Hanumān Ghāt*
21. *(Tom Bāhā)-, Kamal Pokhari*
22. *Nāsamana Bāhā-, Nāsamanā Tole*
23. *Karuṇāmaya Cuk-, Kwāthandau Tole*

# BUDDHIST HERITAGE MAP OF BHAKTAPUR CITY

Presented By: Bhaktapur Buddhist Heritage Society  
e-mail: bktbsampada@hotmail.com



## Annex- 17

### Monasteries in Sankhu

1. *Gam Bāhā- (Padmagiri) Dharmadhātu Mahāvihāra*, North of the village
2. *Thatu Bāhā- Siddhikula Vihāra, Dhwanla Tole*
3. *Duchen Bāhā- Henākara Vihāra, Dhwanla Tole*
4. *Wam Bāhā- Dharmacakra Vihāra, Dhwanla Tole*
5. *Opi Vihāra- Vajracakra Vihāra, Salkha Tole Tole*
6. *Sui Bāhā- Dharmadhātu Vihāra, Duga Hiti Tole*
7. *Na Bāhā- Jnānacakra Vihāra, Duga Hiti*
8. *Mānsu Bāhā- Jayanakara Vihāra, Pukhulachi Tole*
9. *Ko Bāhā- Guṇākara Vihāra, Suna Tole*

### Monasteries in Banepa

1. *Nhu Bāhā- Pārāvata Mahāvihāra, Bāku tole*
2. *Banepā Bahi, Bahi tole*

### Monasteries in Panauti

1. *Pantiyā Bāhā- Dharma Dhātu Mahāvihāra, Wala Chen Tole*
2. *Nhu Bāhā- Kasivarpa Mahāvihāra, Wala Chen Tole*

### Monastery in Khampu

1. *Khampuyā Bāhā- Mantrasiddhi Mahāvihāra*

### Monastery in Nala

1. *Lokeśvara Bāhā- Uttarapantha Mahāvihāra, Outside of the village*

### Monastery in Dolakha

1. *Wāmbu Bāhā- Vandakṛtadeva Mahāvihār*

# Annex- 18

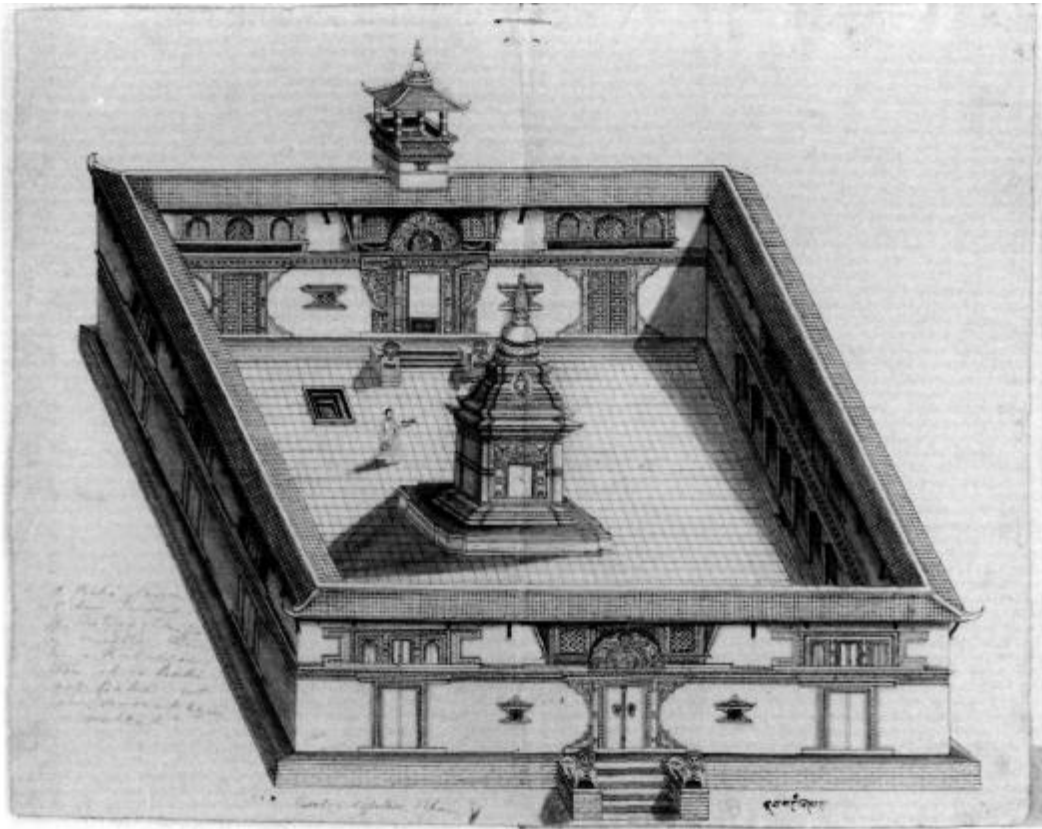


Figure 5.6 'Model of a Vihar'. Musée Guimet, Paris, Hodgson Collection, Set II, no. 13.

Drawing of Hodgson's hired artist

## Annex-19

### Questionnaires

Below given are the questions asked, when the researcher got opportunities to meet concerned persons to collect required information. They are not structured questions. They are informal ones based on discussion.

1. What can be the sources of Nepalese Buddhism ? or what made Nepalese Buddhism look like as it is known today.
2. Is Nepalese Buddhism indeed without monks ?
3. What is monasticism in Nepalese context.
4. How do you look into monastic tradition ?
5. What are the components that make up monasticism ?
6. How would you define *vihār* ?
7. What are the chief features of Nepalese *vihāra* ?
8. What are the difference between *Bahā* and *Bahi* monasteries ?
9. What are the causes behind growing negligence to existing *vihārs* ?
10. How is Buddhist *sangha* formed in Nepalese Buddhism ?
11. What are *Sangha* activities ?
12. Buddhist council or assembly is an important event in Buddhist tradition. Is it arranged regularly by the *sangha*. Has it been productive ?
13. What should be done to improve the present condition of Buddhist monasticism ?
14. Are the changes occurred in Nepalese Buddhism appreciable ?

Interview based upon discussion with Guruju, Tej Ratna Bajracharya, one of the busiest ritual performer. The guru has sound knowledge on rituals but knows less about their meaning.

1. What is the significance of *Gurumandala puja* ?
2. What are the duties of *pravrajita* or ordained ones ?
3. What is the significance of *Karunamaya- bodhisttvas* in Nepalese Buddhism ?

Interview based upon discussion with Phanindra Ratna Bajracharya, one of renowned Buddhist scholar ? He found to have kept good knowledge about various aspects of Nepalese Buddhism.

1. What is *Gurumaṇḍala* ?
2. What actually does esoteric *pujā* mean ?
3. Why only *Vajrācāryas* are regarded as masters for conferring initiations ?  
Why not others who have already received initiations ?
4. Why is *Pancarakṣā pāṭha* often recited during Buddhist gathering like *De ācā guthi* ?
5. Why are the elaborate esoteric rituals like *Mahā bu*, *Cattisamvar* etc are not held today ?
6. What is *pancābhiseka* how is it connected to *ācā luyyigu* and *Dekhā*?

Interview based upon discussion with Phache Rimpoche, abbot of White monastery Sitapaila

1. Why meat, fish, alcohol are often used in *Vajrayānic* rituals or *pūjā* ?  
The *rimpoche* gave answer convincingly on why sinister things like meat, fish, alcohol are used in esoteric rituals

Interview based upon discussion with Suchho Takaoka, a Japanese monk who closely watched and understood Nepalese Buddhism.

1. Is Nepalese Buddhism loosing its ground ?  
He was found to admirer of Nepalese Buddhism. He is very optimistic about Nepalese buddhism and has many suggestion for its upliftment.



**Annex-20**

**A paragraph from *Cīvar-vastu* of *Mūlasarvāstivāda*  
describing how a householder was treated as the monastic(monk)**

**Annex-21*****Dāna-gāthā***

